

# THE NATION

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## EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE League's Permanent Commission on Mandates has published a very careful report upon the outbreak in Palestine, the findings of the Shaw Commission, and the general policy of Great Britain, as Mandatory Power. Although the Commissioners raise a considerable number of questions, some of them debatable, any person who reads their report carefully must realize that the most serious point raised is more a suggestion than a criticism. The Commissioners believe that an energetic policy of land development would reconcile the Arab cultivator to the Jewish immigrant by associating them both in a progressive movement from which each would derive equal benefits. The Commissioners suggest that the British Government have not done as much as they could on this head. They also assert that they warned the British Government against reducing the defence and police forces, and that their warning was unheeded. For the rest the Commissioners suggest that some of the findings of the Shaw Commission were at variance with the evidence, as, for instance, the conclusions that the outburst was not premeditated, and that it was in no way directed against British rule.

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The British Government have not accepted this criticism submissively; indeed, it is quite clear that they regard much of it as unwarranted. Their answer on the question of land policy is that it is better to leave the Palestine Government to raise the necessary funds, as their revenues increase, than that the Treasury should

make large grants-in-aid, secured by heavy mortgages upon Palestinian sources of income. On the question of reducing the defence forces, the British Government deny that the Mandates Commission ever issued anything that could be construed as a warning. Finally, the British Government are rather indignant that "ex parte statements reflecting on the conduct of the British Government" have been accepted by the Commissioners, whilst the considered findings of the Shaw Commission have been dismissed as untenable, or ignored. There does not seem to be much reason in this protest; the duty of the Mandates Commission was to review the whole question; it is not a subject of complaint that they should have been less critical of evidence than the British Government could have wished. The better course would have been to show why statements thought to be authoritative by the Mandates Commissioners were considered untrustworthy by the British authorities on the spot. The existence of the Mandates Commission marks one of the greatest advances which have been achieved in international affairs. It is highly salutary that our "trusteeship" should be impartially surveyed by men of the calibre and experience of Lord Lugard (the British member of the Commission), and we shall only make ourselves ridiculous if we are not able to bear their measured criticisms and suggestions without an official outburst of indignation echoed with megaphones by a section of the British Press.

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It is many years since Mr. Asquith remarked that if it were not for Winston there would be nothing in

the papers, but Mr. Churchill still seems to think it his duty to enliven the "silly season." Last week he made a speech which would have been extremely mischievous if it had been delivered by any other front-rank statesman. Fortunately he has created a tradition peculiar to himself, and people in all parts of the world are likely to shrug their shoulders and say that it is "just Winston." Who else would speak of the "spirit of defeatism in high places which was so rapidly throwing India into chaos"? Who else would couple a high tribute to Sir John Simon with the following description of the Round-Table Conference which is being summoned on Sir John's recommendation?

"A sort of large lively circus in which 80 or 90 Indians, representing hundreds of races and religions, and 20 or 30 British politicians divided by an approaching General Election, were to scrimmage about together on the chance of their coming to some agreement."

We are not without misgivings as to the outcome of the Round-Table Conference, but we find it reassuring when Mr. Churchill wishes to place on record his conviction that it is almost certain that the result will be confusion worse confounded.

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Turning to Egypt, Mr. Churchill pleasantly remarked that the British Government was "eager to scuttle out," and to withdraw our troops from Cairo, where they had preserved order and made progress possible for fifty years. As this could not be immediately accomplished the Foreign Office, under Mr. Arthur Henderson, seemed to be endeavouring to produce an impossible situation by continual interference in Egyptian internal affairs. "One would almost think they were trying to breed a civil war in Egypt as serpents might be bred in the Zoo." These observations are worth putting on record, but they need no reply.

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Mr. Churchill also professed himself unhappy about the Navy. When the Naval Treaty had been carried out, he said, we should be defenceless at sea so far as our food supply was concerned, and dependent upon the goodwill and self-restraint of foreign nations, as we had never been since the days of Charles II. Apparently he was not without hope, however, that the Conservative Party would be reunited in time "to avert the decline and fall of the British Empire"; and it will be noted with interest that when this happy consummation is achieved, "Industry will be stimulated by a tariff." The NEWS CHRONICLE is about to publish Mr. Churchill's memories of his youth. Surely he is not under the illusion that he is now grown-up?

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The Peace Conference between the Congress leaders has still yielded no result; but it is now admitted that the "peace commissioners" have transmitted a letter from Gandhi to the Viceroy, and that the proposals—or suggestions—of the letter are the subject of discussion, possibly even of negotiation. Meanwhile, two bodies which will certainly be represented at the Round Table Conference have passed decisions which are illustrative of a general tendency to rally round the Simon Commission Report, and to amend it only in details. The European Association at Calcutta passed a resolution in this sense, but only, it would appear, by a small majority; a very powerful and articulate minority desired a move in an opposite direction: the abolition of the existing state of affairs and a return to the Morley-Minto régime.

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At Trancore representatives of the Southern Indian States have met in conference, under the chairman-

ship of Sir Mirza Ismail, the Dewan of Mysore, with the Maharajah of Travancore listening to the proceedings. The first attitude of the Princes was not very favourable to the Report, and the proceedings of this conference are an interesting indication of a gradual change of opinion. In his inaugural speech the Dewan stated that although he disagreed with a great deal of the Report, he deprecated reviewing it hastily or with prejudice as it would undoubtedly form the main basis of discussion at the Round-Table Conference; later on he said, apparently with the approval of his audience, that "full autonomy in the provinces and responsibility at the centre," with transitional safeguards would satisfy all reasonable people in India. It is at the present moment important that as many representatives as possible should be given such terms of reference, for the danger to the conference, indeed, to any conference, is that it will fail to do any constructive work owing to its size, and the impracticable instructions of some of its delegates. On this head it is to be noted that the gathering of European men of affairs in Calcutta only just avoided giving their representatives an instruction as visionary as any that Mahatma Gandhi would be likely to issue.

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The Bromley by-election continues to develop features of more than passing interest. On Monday, a letter from Lord Beaverbrook was published, in which he said that he was not a member of the United Empire Party, and that his sole concern with the election was to know whether Mr. Campbell (the official Conservative candidate) had promised to support Empire Free Trade. "He has declared over and over again that the policy has his warmest personal support, but he has not made it clear whether that personal support carries with it a pledge to vote for Empire Free Trade in the House of Commons irrespective of what his leaders may decide to do." To this Mr. Campbell promptly replied:—

"I shall always loyally support the duly elected leader of my party and will never betray the pledge which I gave to the Bromley Conservative and Unionist Association when they adopted me."

This answer does not seem calculated to satisfy Lord Beaverbrook, but it has apparently done so, for it is stated that he will take no part in the election. The significance of his decision is that Lord Beaverbrook and his Empire Crusaders are drawing away from Lord Rothermere and his United Empire Party, probably because they are confident that they have captured the Conservative Party.

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Mr. Baldwin does not seem to have realised the important distinction between these two leaders and their respective organizations, for he has written to Mr. Campbell expressing great surprise that the local branch of the United Empire Party should have decided to oppose him. "After reading your election address and your views on Empire policy, it is difficult," wrote Mr. Baldwin, "to understand their object." The answer is clear. Their objects are, firstly, to get rid of Mr. Baldwin; secondly, "full-blooded Protection"; and, thirdly, a Churchillian policy which includes "a firm hand in India and Egypt." The practical question which emerges is whether the United Empire candidate will draw away enough votes from the official Conservative to secure a Liberal victory. But whatever the result may be, the Bromley election will mark a further stage in the surrender of the Tory Party to Lord Beaverbrook's propaganda.



The Conference of Australian Ministers has passed resolutions and given undertakings which experts regard as a sufficient guarantee for assistance from the Bank of England. The Federal authorities promise that the Budget shall be balanced at once, and that a monthly statement of revenue receipts, expenditures, short-term debts, and the state of the loan account, shall be published in Australia and overseas. Some of the States forego unemployment grants from the Federal Treasury, and a promise is given to reduce the salaries of Government officials. On these conditions, the Bank of England is apparently willing to assist in the payment of the £5,000,000 of Treasury bills which fall due on September 1st, and in the settlement of a sum of £36,000,000 payable abroad before the end of the year. Sir Otto Niemeyer, who has acted as a general adviser to the Conference, has issued an independent report, which will surely cause every thoughtful Australian to reflect upon the dangers which the country has avoided, but which will certainly recur, in a more menacing shape, unless Australian Ministers adopt different financial standards from those which have prevailed in the past.

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Some time ago public opinion in this country was disturbed to learn that the Polish Government was apparently utilizing the powerful machinery of taxation in a fashion which menaced important sections of the German minority in Upper Silesia. The firm affected was the great Pless mining concern—the Powell Duffryn of the Polish Upper Silesian coalfield—against which the Polish fiscal authorities lodged a demand for immediate payment of large arrears of income tax in respect of past years when the firm's audited books showed not a profit but a loss; and when the Pless undertaking pleaded its inability to lay its hands at such short notice on sufficient liquid funds to satisfy demands against which it strenuously protested, the Polish Government proceeded to measures of coercion. The case has now been brought before the Mixed Tribunal which adjudicates the claims of the Upper Silesian minority, and the Polish Government has agreed to withhold further coercive measures until a settlement has been negotiated. It is very much to be hoped that the case will be amicably settled, and that the Polish Government will seize the opportunity to demonstrate by deeds (and not merely by words) its sense of responsibility as one of the principal Powers of Europe and its determination to accord its minorities the even-handed treatment which its treaty obligations prescribe.

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The Lithuanian Government has, very wisely, decided to request the League's good offices for settling the unsatisfactory state of affairs on the Polish frontier. The administrative and Customs line between the two countries was fixed by an agreement signed at Königsberg in November, 1928. For reasons which have not been properly explained, the arrangements have been very unsatisfactory; most probably a continuous movement of casual labourers at the harvest and sowing seasons has not been properly handled by Customs officials and frontier guards, who are none too experienced. A number of incidents have certainly occurred, and have embittered relations between two Governments which have never been friendly. The League has been so successful in settling questions of this kind in the Balkans, that their good offices, if accepted, might give progressive results. At the present moment, the matter is on the agenda of the Council; but the Polish authorities have not replied to the Secretary-General's invitation to state their views.

A letter in a recent issue drew attention once more to a grave defect in the law relating to British nationality. Under the existing law, a woman of British nationality who marries a foreigner is deemed to be an alien even though the laws of her husband's country do not enable her automatically to acquire his nationality; whereas a woman of foreign nationality who marries a British subject is automatically deemed to be of British nationality. This legislation results at best in irritation, vexatious formalities, and tiresome supervision; while women who are subjected to its more serious and by no means infrequent consequences suffer grievous disabilities, grave hardships, and severe penalties. Reform is urgent; and it is much to be hoped that the forthcoming Imperial Conference, whose agenda already includes this question, will agree upon uniform action throughout the Empire. Disagreement at the Imperial Conference, however, must not, as too often in the past, be made the excuse for postponing reform. This is a matter in which Britain can and should take the lead, and which a Labour Government, already heavily pledged in its favour, can have no justification for delay.

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There is something singularly attractive about Captain Barnard's informal flights from Lympne to Malta and Tangier. No purely inland journey of the same length could tickle the imagination in the same way. It is Captain Barnard's flair to leave England after an early breakfast and take his tea on the North Coast of Africa or his dinner in Valetta. There may be nothing remarkable in the duration of his flights but it is his imperturbable way of "popping in" to Mediterranean ports, demanding a meal and a shake-down—and returning early next morning (much as if he had been to spend the evening with a friend in a neighbouring county), that gives a casual touch to his journeys—which cannot but be of value in fostering confidence in long-distance civil aviation.

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Our Irish Correspondent writes: "Active preparations are now being made for the elections to the newly constituted Dublin Corporation under the Greater Dublin Act. Surrounding districts and townships have been incorporated, not without heartburnings (at least one, it is said, is holding illegal meetings), and the new body will consist of thirty-five members. Thirty of these will be elected by 140,000 voters in five areas, while five will be elected as commercial representatives. The number likely to be on the commercial register is given as between 1,000 to 3,000. The experiment of direct special representation of the commercial community is a new one. The election is to take place at the end of September. This election is remarkable in-so-far as no local elections have taken place in Dublin for the past six years—since in fact the three Commissioners were appointed to take the place of the Corporation. The Corporation and the Lord Mayor went reluctantly. Time was when you could guess the political camp of any citizen by his description of Mr. L. J. O'Neill either as "Lord Mayor" or "ex-Lord Mayor," for the deposition was not accepted. Now the Commissioners are to go. It would be pleasant to write of the resurgence of democratic feeling, of the rolling back of the wave of Fascism which swept across Europe to this farthest outpost. But the recoil, if it exists, must be subconscious. No one with the exception of the groups busy selecting candidates seems interested. The resumption of democratic responsibilities and mayoral splendours is popularly uncelebrated. It looks almost as if the people were being forced to rule themselves."

## THE CHALLENGE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

**J**UST before Parliament was prorogued two committees were set up to deal with unemployment. The first is charged with general unemployment policy. It comprises, on the one hand, the Prime Minister and those members of the Cabinet specially concerned with unemployment, and, on the other hand, three representatives of the Liberal Party—Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Lothian, and Mr. Seeborn Rowntree. The task of the other committee is more restricted. Constituted from all three parties, each of which has sent two members, its duty is to frame measures, agreed if possible, for restoring to solvency the deplorably waterlogged system of unemployment insurance. Since Parliament separated, these two committees have gone underground. Meanwhile, unemployment continues to increase; the latest returns show 2,018,000 on the live register, or 855,700 more than a year ago; and the bad winter months are still before us. What, then, is the outlook for unemployment? The policies adopted hitherto have clearly been inadequate. Can nothing now be done? Must we sit with folded hands and watch, with mingled impotence and despair, while the figures steadily rise? Or are there means for tackling the problem with a reasonable hope of success?

In the first place, we must recall certain essential elements of the problem. The total of two million unemployed are not all out of work for the same reasons. There are those who are merely shifting from one job to another, or are employed in seasonal or casual trades, or are the temporary sufferers from industrial maladjustment. Even in the best pre-war days, at the height of a trade boom, unemployment of this nature existed. To-day this group numbers perhaps half a million. Then there are the unemployed who were in work a year ago and are now the victims of the world-wide trade depression. Such unemployment—cyclical unemployment, as the economists term it—was also familiar in pre-war depressions. To-day this category of the unemployed totals perhaps three quarters of a million. Finally, there is a residual class, likewise numbering about three-quarters of a million, drawn mainly from the depressed staple industries, whose members have been chronically out of work for a decade—though, of course, not all the individuals have been continuously unemployed for that period—and who form the hard core of the post-war unemployment problem. Plainly, each of these classes of the unemployed must be dealt with by a different method.

The dominating factor in the whole problem is, however, the failure of Britain's industrial system to adapt itself to the post-war world. This lack of adaptability, the outstanding characteristic of British economic life during the whole of the post-war decade, has manifested itself in a hundred ways. On the side of the employers it appears chiefly in the failure to carry out thoroughgoing rationalization. Amongst the workers it takes the form of rigid wage-rates, immobility between trades and areas, severe trade-union restrictions and regulations. For this failure of British industry to adapt itself to post-war conditions, there are, it is true, many reasons and some excuses. The task

has been most formidable. Britain after the war has confronted a changed economic world. Her financial policy has imposed crushing burdens; her monetary policy has increased the burdens of taxation at the same time that it stifled enterprise. The war cut off the flower of our younger generation and has left our post-war problems to be tackled by men with minds steeped in pre-war ideas. But however strong and justifiable the reasons and causes, the fact remains: we have not adjusted ourselves to the new post-war world; and in that fact lies the one element of the unemployment problem which can be neglected no longer.

What, then, must we do? Two extremes of policy can plainly be ruled out of court. Neither protection nor pensions can help us. Even if the arguments for abandoning Free Trade were conclusive—and in our opinion they are neither conclusive nor convincing—time would be needed to bring a change of fiscal policy into operation, and for this reason, apart from all others, the idea that Protection can effect an immediate and substantial reduction in unemployment is a gross delusion. Wholesale pension schemes for older workers, reduced working hours, the dole for everyone—these proposals are no better. Far from curing unemployment, they would make it permanently incurable. And both Protection and the whole realm of Socialist fantasy would not merely not help; they would do still further harm: they would delay the all-round adjustment to post-war conditions which is at once our urgent need and our hope of salvation. It is not amongst the Bourbons of Socialism or Tariff Reform that we shall find a remedy for the unemployment problem.

Let us face the facts squarely. Deplorable as the Government's unemployment policy has been throughout the past year, it is not responsible for the heavy increase in unemployment since it took office; and equally, though by suitable measures it can reduce unemployment, the Government singlehanded cannot conquer it. If we are to rid ourselves of this economic rot, the energies of all classes throughout the whole country must be concentrated on the task. Nothing less will suffice.

The first move rests with the Government; and its policy should be developed along three main lines. In the first place, it must drastically reconstruct the present system of unemployment insurance. Even before the changes of last winter, the system was bad enough; but now its hypertrophy and abuse have made it a threat to the Budget and a means not for relieving but for creating unemployment.

The Government must also push on vigorously with national development. Politically, it is true, the creation of employment by means of capital undertakings is no longer popular; and, indeed, it would be a great mistake to entertain exaggerated notions as to their possibilities. But we are in a situation where half a loaf or less is far better than no bread; and it is preposterous to imagine either that the need for capital development does not exist or that no resources are available for the purpose. Further acceleration of road schemes may or may not be practical or desirable; but roads are not the only national asset demanding development. Housing, slum clearance, the improvement of ports, harbours and waterways, the speeding up



of electrification—all these fields contain at least some promise, and they should all be worked to the full. Nor should agriculture be overlooked. Dr. Addison, the Minister of Agriculture, made further reference this week to the Government's plans for encouraging small holdings. When will these plans emerge from the departmental pigeon-holes and help to reduce the numbers of the unemployed?

In the past, and particularly since the report of the Industrial Transference Board, a great deal has been made of the policy of training and transference as a means of combating unemployment. But since in fact that negative policy has failed to deal with more than a trifling number, the Government must now turn, in the third place, to the positive policy of developing new industries in the distressed areas. The immobility of the workers in these districts is too great for any but the most powerful economic forces to cope with. But if the workers will not move to industry, then industries must be brought to the workers. It is little short of madness to allow highly developed areas, equipped with all the material adjuncts of modern economic life, to go derelict for want of a little energy and enterprise. Magnificent resources for scientific research are at the Government's command. America has shown what science can do when it is directed towards finding new sources of production and wealth. It is entirely within our power to follow suit. And if inducements have to be offered to this end, if, for example, further abatements of local rates are necessary in these districts, it is at least more rational and more justifiable to grant temporary assistance to new enterprises which will permanently increase the national wealth than to pour our resources down the bottomless pit of the dole.

It is our firm belief that along these lines the Government can tackle and reduce unemployment. But much else must also be done which no Government can accomplish. Industry must set its own house in order. Rationalization can no longer safely be delayed. It is necessary also for labour to realize that wage reductions cannot be permanently resisted in periods of rapidly falling prices, and that somehow and in some places adjustments must be made. None of these tasks are pleasant; and their carrying out will make many people uncomfortable. But comfort is not the highest ideal of life; even for the wealthiest and most fortunate nations, the modern economic world is a stern master; and the present industrial situation is far from comfortable.

It would be absurd to suggest that the policy we have outlined can at once reduce the number of unemployed by half or a quarter. By the means proposed we can deal with our chronic unemployment, prepare ourselves to take the utmost advantage of the trade revival when it comes, and so reduce the numbers of the cyclically unemployed. But full employment depends on the state of trade, and trade will not completely revive until the necessary international equilibrium has been restored. Moreover, as Sir Josiah Stamp shows in the notable article which we publish this week, if gold prices continue to fall as precipitously as in recent months, a prolonged period of intense difficulty must be expected. But however the course of international trade shapes itself, whatever movements occur

in gold prices, this country has special adjustments which it can make alone and which it must make unless it is prepared permanently to surrender its place amongst the leading industrial nations. The invisible currents of time and change may be against us, as some gloomy prophets urge. But largely, at least, our fate rests in our own hands. This time, we may not be able to muddle through to the better things we all desire; but if we accept the challenge of a great emergency, we need not fear the future.

## GOLD, THE ARBITER OF DESTINY

BY SIR JOSIAH STAMP.

IT is rather extraordinary how widely spread the belief still is that the Gold Standard leaves the country adopting it in a position of independence, and that the benefits it confers can be had without any responsibilities. The truth that the Gold Standard has bound together the civilized world for good or evil in the greatest international partnership ever known in history, that this partnership, while conferring benefits on each partner, also imposes upon them stern duties, and that transgressions by any one partner inflict hardships on the rest, is hardly realized." These wise words are quoted from a memorandum on "Gold and the Price Level," written by Sir Henry Strakosch, and published as a special supplement by the *ECONOMIST* of July 5th, with some excellent line and coloured graphs. It is safe to say that this is the most compact and complete presentation of the factual aspects of the question up to date that has so far appeared, and Sir Henry has performed a public service which has not yet been appreciated at its full worth. The facts are so cogently presented that even the most casual student or sceptical reader must be impressed; and, even more important, those who are giving skilled presentations of different aspects of the diagnosis of our current troubles will, it is to be hoped, find a new emphasis and a new order for the several factors in the situation. For there is undoubtedly some confusion in the public mind and an impression that the economists are far more at variance than they really are, due to the fact that while the majority would give the same list of active elements in the present problem, they put them in various orders, and each tends to be known exclusively by the one he puts in the forefront.

The most active protagonists of Free Trade lay the major blame for our present discontents upon the rapidly multiplying impediments to freedom and the multiplication of barriers and nationalistic aims; the business efficiencyes refer to the urgent need of rationalization in our export trades, to enable us to compete on level terms either with the output of huge rationalized units abroad, or lower-paid labour abroad; the financial purists find our major ills in the huge burden of public taxation and the much greater charge per man employed, or per unit of trade; some still assert that the destruction of wealth during the war is the fundamental condition; others, like Mr. J. A. Hobson, see that, through the uneven distribution of wealth, the "savings" for production goods are in excess of the consuming power for their products, which we allow to remain in the hands of the consumer. A small but growing contingent, while admitting all these factors, insist that the rapid fall in prices measured in gold, due to gold becoming less abundant relatively than goods (or than the

purchasing "work" to be effected), is the paramount issue, the fundamental trouble. I think I have taken my part from time to time in urging the issues of freedom of trade, of excessive social service burdens, of rationalization, of "balance" in the application of savings, but I have not failed during the past eight years to give pride of place at first amongst our potential dangers, and later, amongst our effective handicaps, to the monetary factor. As the adoption of the Gold Standard approached, I felt and asserted that we should have to pay a heavy industrial price for it, and that the adoption of gold generally might give America a deciding voice as to the real burden of our debt. On its adoption in this country, I wrote that it must in any case be an internationally "managed" standard, and would not manage itself, and I took part in inserting into the Dawes Plan a protection against such changes in the value of gold as would wreck the settlement and give Germany an impossible task; at the time of the coal stoppage, in an addendum to the Report of the Court of Inquiry, I asserted that the then difficulties of the coal export trade were the first fruits of a return to gold effected before we were in a position to make the necessary internal adjustments of costs and wages, and that although the return might well be worth the price, there *was* a price—which at that time most people were too impatient to admit and it was politically inexpedient to acknowledge. I have not ceased since, in and out of season, to protest that until the world had learnt the *international* rules of the game, rapid changes in a gold price level would be a bigger menace to Great Britain than to any other country, only to be countered successfully by an elasticity of industrial and financial factors which seemed politically unattainable. I welcomed the Bank for International Settlements as a real possibility for constant common consultation and action, and the only eventual hope for a satisfactory solution. This is recited, not for prescience, but only because so many who have recently hailed the issue for the first time imagine that no one else has seen the danger, or that it is some new discovery, to be suspected and prodded like an innovation.

But here it now is, the worst danger that eight years ago any of us could have feared, more sinister in its possibilities for evil, and finding us, internationally, relatively helpless, drifting, with aggravating factors, such as the continual demonetization of silver, still further into economic disaster.

In addition to whatever may be done by the Bank for International Settlements, we have, studying the problem, a Special Committee of the Financial Section of the League of Nations, a "gold group" in the Institute of International Affairs, and a forward movement, extremely influentially supported, of the Stable Money Association. Moreover, those Central Banks that are alive to the importance of the issues are doing all possible in co-operation to meet the demands of policy, consistent with their internal responsibilities; but, as Sir Henry points out, it needs the co-operation of all, and by no means all have yet found a sense of responsibility or appreciated what is actually happening.

Sir Henry Strakosch's memorandum should be studied by all who are trying to understand the phenomenal character of the times through which we are passing. He shows that gold has appreciated in value in the period from December, 1925, to the end of May, 1930, by 32.1 per cent., of which 9.6 per cent. occurred in the last five months. He deals concisely but clearly with the contention that this is due to general "over production." For a long time production has advanced annually in a much greater ratio than population. Of the commodities in-

cluded in the price index as between December, 1928, and May, 1930, 71 per cent. have fallen, 19 per cent. have risen, and 10 been unchanged. "There is thus a superabundance in nearly three-quarters of the various kinds of raw materials the world needs currently, there is an anxiety of the producers of each of these materials to exchange them for others, and yet they are not exchanged.

"We are, in these circumstances, entitled to conclude that these exchanges failed to be made, not because goods generally were in excessive supply, but because the process of exchange was in some way impeded. And if, as is the case, there are no observable impediments of a physical or moral character, the theory of "over-production" fails and we are driven for an adequate explanation to the only remaining factor affecting the process of exchange, viz., the adequacy of the amount of money that is available to effect these exchanges."

From the popular point of view, one of the most novel features in the memorandum is the table showing the uneven distribution of gold reserves: Great Britain has £8 8s. per head of the population, U.S.A. £6 7s., France £8, Argentine £9 4s. The average at the end of 1929 for the eight chief countries was £4 and for the remainder £1 7s. There is no such difference in the efficiency of the credit systems of these countries to require a difference of 100 per cent. in the U.S.A. and 140 per cent. in France in the reserves.

The deficiency in the supply of monetary gold in relation to the assumed requirements of an additional 3 per cent. per annum was not remarkable till the end of 1928, and the fall in prices was commensurate. But in 1929 there was a deficiency of 100 per cent., and the price fall was large, sharp, and immediate. The whole of the 1929 supply was absorbed by U.S.A. and France, and, altogether, 110 million £ was abstracted, for real price significance, from the gold-using countries. What else could be expected than a complete landslide?

But even a violent price movement would not be an economic disaster if there were complete mobility and fluidity in all the parts of the industrial and social machine, and therefore the further section of the memorandum, which gives a graphic review of the distribution of the National Income in the United Kingdom, is the most significant part of this study. About 17 per cent. of the income goes in the profits of enterprise, and is immediately subject to the impact of price change, while the remainder suffers either not at all or much more slowly.

Sir Henry traces the effect of these varying degrees of vulnerability on the field for employment, and the curtailment of demand—our "present discontents."

"The phenomenon is due, not to 'over-production,' but to the retardation in the process of exchange, and therefore of consumption, caused by a drastic redistribution of wealth resulting from the fall in the general level of commodity prices which, in turn, owes its origin to an inadequate supply of currency and credit."

It is well that every aspect of the world's inability to control its industrial progress on scientific lines—and particularly every aspect of the British failure to do so—should be fully explored, and every local and temporary expedient or palliative or correction applied. But it is vital to realize that without control of the fundamental factor in operation no rationalization of technique, no freedom from restraints and burdens, no initiative in the human element, no control of public expenditure, can avail to keep a complicated civilization from drifting into peril and even disintegration.

Mr. G. D. H. Cole's recent little volume of four essays for laymen, "Gold, Credit, and Employment" (George Allen & Unwin, 5s.), is the latest contribution to a most



useful insistence on certain aspects of the problem. The second half deals more specifically with direct remedies for unemployment in relief schemes at the present moment, but the first essay has a very clear exposition of the essentials of the Gold Standard, and particularly of the choice between the apparently irreconcilable aims of stability in the price level and stability in the exchange rates, and, therefore, in foreign trade. Moreover, although the precise intermediate position which Mr. Cole takes up in monetary policy may not commend itself to us all, he undoubtedly sets in useful contrast the extreme views of the "*laissez-faire* hard-shell gold-bugs," and of those who would manage currency without any metallic "let or hindrance," by the light of nature and statistical crystal-gazing.

## AMERICA AND INDIA

BY AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST.

THE latest effort of the TIMES to enlighten American opinion on India, by reprinting Mr. Edward Thompson's three articles in pamphlet form\* for use in the United States, cannot be regarded as a particularly happy one. These articles contain much that is illuminating, but on account of certain unfortunate remarks, and the form in which the argument is couched, they will make a strong appeal only to those already converted. They will not win over the ignorant or prejudiced. In fact, the suggestion that Americans are wont to give attention only to the outpouring of a mind that "screams," and that the American "public and publicists care little for accuracy," is quite as likely to result in irritation as persuasion.

It is true that there is a vast amount of ignorance in the United States with regard to British accomplishment and policy in India. That is hardly surprising. I do not know that average British opinion even, apart from that professionally connected with India in some capacity or other, was especially well-informed, prior to the issue of the Simon Commission Report. There is misrepresentation, which is not surprising also to those who have had any knowledge of the activities of Indian Nationalists in some of the Eastern cities during the past ten or eleven years. India is remote, comparatively few Americans except returned missionaries have any direct personal knowledge of conditions there—indeed, the subject is enormously complex. Moreover, there are many different truths about India, not all of which are comprised within the covers even of that monumental publication, the Simon Commission Report. On some matters, apart from indisputably established historical and economic facts, the onlooker is inclined to believe that there can legitimately be more than one opinion. In other words, there is a British case, but there is also an Indian Nationalist case, whether we agree with it or not, and it is perhaps not unnatural that Americans should listen to both.

In reading the articles, they seemed to me to present a picture of American opinion, that was lacking both in proportion and in an exact sense of comparative American values. Mr. Thompson has brought together an interesting collection of misstatements and unfriendly judgments, but his facts are too slight to warrant his sweeping conclusions and the general impression he gives of the adequacy and accuracy of American sources of information is hardly a fair one. For instance, the papers he cites are, with the

exception of that able weekly, the NEW REPUBLIC, without real weight or standing. The NEW REPUBLIC has a limited circulation among liberal-minded people of intellectual attainments or pretensions in schools, colleges, the churches, the professions generally. That it should have gone wrong with regard to India is regrettable, but the TIMES should take comfort from the fact that exactly the same people who read it will also read the NEW YORK TIMES, which carries many of its own Indian dispatches, or some other paper of similar character.

Against the attitude of the NEW REPUBLIC and that of the NEW YORK NATION (which Mr. Thompson does not mention, but which is, as anyone familiar with its philosophy and temperament would expect, the most militantly pro-Gandhist of all) must be weighed the amount of space devoted to the Simon Commission Report by many of the large dailies and their careful editorial comment. When I was in America early in May, the two great news services, which serve newspapers all over the country, were sending news on India, which seemed to be up to their usual standards of accuracy and impartiality, and I have never heard anything to indicate that that has not been the case since. In telling the truth, they have undoubtedly described some distressing incidents, because there have been distressing incidents, such as are bound to characterize even the most gently forcible suppression of resistance to the law. They cannot be blamed for that, if the news is given without bias.

I have not read the two books dealt with by Mr. Thompson, and am prepared to assume that their errors and absurdities deserve severe criticism. When he says, however, that one of them was enthusiastically reviewed in the "best American papers," and goes on to quote, as his single example, from THE WORLD TO-MORROW, that is not very convincing. For that monthly paper, which was originally founded in connection with the Fellowship of Reconciliation and can have but a small circulation, has always been identified with idealistic, but very extreme views on peace and international affairs in general. Just so it is with the NEW YORK NATION. Just so with Mr. Norman Thomas, the Socialist leader, who, in outlook, might be described as the composite counterpart of the Left Wing of the Labour Party. Without disparaging their sincerity, one would not expect any of these to entertain different views on the Indian question from those that they have expressed.

Two facts of some interest do not emerge from Mr. Thompson's articles. First, roughly speaking, the same type of people are in sympathy with the extreme aspirations of Indian Nationalism, as is the case here. It would be difficult to believe that ordinary American business men are much impressed by these views, whether they come across them in a "tabloid" monthly or not. Secondly, American liberal-radical opinion, which still retains a rigidity of mind made flexible in the body of Labour here by the mellowing and conservatizing effect of the responsibilities of office, has been greatly affected on this question of India by certain British influences, notably by Mr. C. F. Andrews. The same issue of THE WORLD TO-MORROW, from which Mr. Thompson quotes, contains articles by Mr. Andrews and Mr. Reginald Reynolds, Mr. Gandhi's young English disciple. Such a lurid book, too, as "Must England Lose India?" by Lt.-Col. Arthur Osburn, D.S.O., reviewed in the NEW YORK NATION of July 30th, under the heading "A Brutalized India," will help to confirm previous mistaken convictions.

One of the most striking things about America in recent years has been the growth of a great body of middle

\* "America and India." By Edward Thompson. Reprinted from the TIMES, July, 1930. 2d.

opinion, deeply interested in international affairs, sincerely anxious to obtain reliable information, disposed to moderate and impartial judgment. This is the kind of opinion represented by the Conference on the Cause and Cure of War, with its huge affiliated organizations, embracing two million women all over the country, by the Foreign Policy Association, with its scholarly reports and widespread educational work on international questions, and by other more conservative organizations. I do not know to what extent this large section of responsible opinion is turning its attention to India, but I should be surprised to learn that any considerable portion of it had adopted either Dr. Hall's or Dr. Sunderland's book as its Bible—any more than "Mother India." With regard to the latter, it may certainly be said, that despite its provocative title, its omissions and other demerits, it was both a courageous and an effective book. Further, it exposed to multitudes of Americans the falsity of economic misstatements of the very kind with regard to which Mr. Thompson complains that the British case has to go by default. He should give a good word to Miss Mayo for that.

Such an "appeal" as that issued very early this year by the India Independence League of America to their fellow-citizens, must appear in British eyes utterly wrong-headed, officious and exasperating. Mr. Thompson's indignation is justifiable, although he does not make clear that the signatories practically all represent an extreme minority point of view, even on American questions. But when he says that the British do not hold meetings to discuss the negro question, or the Philippines, or American action in the Caribbean, &c., one is tempted to reply that, in the first place, there is no analogy at the moment between these instances and the present situation with regard to India, and, in the second place, that, if an appropriate American occasion arose, meetings would certainly be held in Britain. For while the British, as private individuals, are renowned for their agreeable trait of attending strictly to their own affairs, that this has been a distinguishing feature of their public life seems disputable, when one recalls certain episodes in the career of Lord Palmerston, or Gladstone's Neapolitan Letters, or the Midlothian campaign, or the Friends of Russian Freedom, or the Friends of Armenia, or Minorities Conferences, or many other instances too numerous to mention, which have demonstrated British concern with alleged oppression in some part of the world. I am afraid that this concern, this instinctive sympathy with peoples believed to be struggling to be free is a family characteristic, sometimes misdirected, as in this case of a minority in America, and in the case of the widespread sympathy with the South in England at the time of the American Civil War.

It is probably true that it is desirable by well-directed efforts to bring to the attention of Americans the true facts with regard to the great work which Britain has done for India, the difficulties of the present delicate situation, the appointed goal of future progress, and the best and wisest way of reaching it. Such informative missions as those of Sir John Simon and Lord Meston will most assuredly be warmly welcomed. No doubt Mr. Thompson, in the platform efforts he mentions, did a great deal to spread enlightenment and to create a sympathetic attitude towards the tremendous problem with which British statesmanship is now confronted. On the other hand, obvious propaganda is likely to do more harm than good. Is there really any need to bother about propaganda? Many things, even now, must be clearer than in the spring. After all, the real, the irrefutable answer to all misconceptions lies in the events of the next few months. If America sees,

if the world sees, British and Indian leaders sitting around a table, working out together a constructive scheme for the future well-being of India as a member of the British Commonwealth, British policy will require no further justification. All hostile criticism will be silenced, and misrepresentation will fade away.

## THE TRAGEDY OF ANDRÉE

IN the story, so far as we know it, of the discovery of the bodies of the Swedish explorer and balloonist Andrée, and of one of his companions on his expedition to the North Pole, there is nothing more poignant than the fact that their mocassins were found to be worn out. Though there seems to be little doubt that their balloon, if forced down, landed safely, and that they made a considerable trek to their encampment on White Island, those worn mocassins seem to suggest a prolonged and terrible struggle against approaching death. In these days such a flight in a non-dirigible balloon (though Andrée claimed that he could partly direct his) into unknown wastes of ice and snow must seem an heroic lunacy which should never have been allowed to be attempted. Yet under the conditions of the time it could perhaps be considered no more hazardous than many pioneer attempts in imperfect vehicles which have been made since. Great faith in the possibilities of the balloon had existed since the eighteenth century, and Blanchard's voyage across the Channel (in 1785) was in every way as sensational a feat as that of Blieriot's more than a hundred years later. Jules Verne, indeed, might have been as great a prophet as H. G. Wells.

Andrée, with his far more ambitious scheme, was an experienced balloonist and a skilled engineer. He received considerable support and encouragement; there was a prevalent belief, at the time, that he might succeed, just as there was a persistent hope for many months after his disappearance that he might be found—and found to have accomplished if not his object at least some part of it. There is no evidence that his was regarded as an entirely mad project, though it is known that as the hour of the attempt drew nearer, he himself became pessimistic of success. It may well be asked what decision he should have taken in the face of his own doubts, but men of his mould allow themselves no hesitation, and where they have succeeded have done so by the exercise of inflexible will which might as often be called a simple obstinacy.

Till a few days ago the story of Andrée's fate had been a complete mystery. With two companions he made the ascent from Dane Island, Spitzbergen, on July 11th, 1897. A message carried by a pigeon established the fact that his balloon was still in the air two days later. After that not a word was heard from him. In the following years no less than four expeditions set out in search of the party, all without success. Now on the sixth of this month, thirty-three years later, a Norwegian scientific expedition, landing at White Island has by the accident of mild weather been able to complete the tragic story, and the melting ice has revealed Andrée's last encampment.

The full details cannot be known till the entries in his diary are available, and this may prove as enduring and painful a narrative as that of Scott. This at least we may guess, that these men may have lived in the hope of rescue for a long period. They had taken with them provisions for six months—and by the aid of their guns they could have supplemented their store from the beginning. This was always known, that had no initial disaster overcome their balloon, there was for a long time a hope of rescue.



One doubts whether any age or generation has been more conspicuous than another for that type of adventurer who explores the unknown, with certain death as the price of failure. Certainly our own time has not been behind-hand in affording examples, some of which are too recent to need quotation—but some differentiation should be made between those who seem to brave death for the excitement of it, and those who do so to serve some high human purpose.

It would be difficult for a layman (perhaps even for a scientist) to answer the question whether the toll of noble lives claimed by the Arctic regions has been compensated by the contribution made to the knowledge of those inhospitable parts. It is certainly doubtful whether the repeated explorations of past centuries have not owed more to the urgent spirit of the adventurer than to a desire to advance human progress. Men drive motor-cars at immense speeds, at the risk of their lives, and it is explained that their efforts are of great value in the science of engine construction. Can it be denied that they mainly do so because they like the thrill of immense speed? The secrets of engine construction are more probably revealed in the laboratory than on the racing track.

So though there is enough of the boy left in us still to be thrilled by the exploits of such a man as Andrée—it must be readily admitted that those pioneers who have wrested valuable secrets from wild and obscure places have done so by their equipment as scientists, by their power to endure hardship, by their indomitable energy, rather than from any desire to flirt with danger.

J. B. STERNDALÉ BENNETT.

### MACFLECKNOE'S DILEMMA

A PUNCH poet, in an "Ode to Bloomsbury," suggests that a mere "doggerel bard" must needs be "asphyxiated and nonplussed" by the august company of "the Olympians who rule THE NATION."

ALTHOUGH my brow is, frankly, low,  
I count it chief among my pleasures  
That, marching arm-in-arm abreast  
With Bloomsbury's brainiest and best,  
My random rhyme and scurril jest  
Are privileged to tread their trivial measures.

When anybody wants to know  
Who are the nation's leading sages,  
It pleases me to make reply:  
"Well, J. M. Keynes, and Roger Fry,  
And Mr. Leonard Woolf and I,  
Instruct the public in THE NATION'S pages."

But now there falls a frightful blow,  
For cruel Mr. Punch has stated  
That, in that company august,  
The doggerel bardlet's mouth with dust  
Must soon be stopped; his lyre must rust,  
And his poor Muse be quite asphyxiated.

Judge then what an abysmal woe  
One random rhymester here rehearses!  
Our laughing censor, looking through  
The wares that we expose to view,  
Must, if his Ode's report be true,  
Have totally ignored MacFlecknoe's verses. . . .

Or is it . . . (let me think it so,  
And blush with pleasure to my eyebrows!)  
That (covering each rhythmic prank  
With intellectual brevet-rank)  
Good Mr. Punch I have to thank  
For seating me henceforth among the highbrows?  
MACFLECKNOE.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### IMPORT BOARDS

SIR,—I can ask for space in your columns only to make one thing clear, for the sake of accuracy, in which I think that Mr. Barber on Mr. Wise's account "doth protest too much." I wrote that while Mr. Wise's proposal before the Farmers' Club in February had been to pay the home producer, "in any case not less than at a parity with the estimated landed price of imported wheat of corresponding quality [which means lower than this price, because of the greater water-content of our grain], Mr. Wise proposed at Oxford to give 50s. per quarter, which is 12s. higher than the imported price." Mr. Barber says that this is a misunderstanding, for the proposal to give the farmer the higher price was "definitely included" in the Farmers' Club paper. The words quoted are judicious, and quite correct. The suggestion of the extra price *was* included, but only as an illustration of what might be done *if Parliament decided on an arable subsidy*. And the illustration came at the end of a careful argument in reply to a possible objection to Mr. Wise's scheme, namely, that farmers might "require a price substantially higher than a reasonable parity with average world prices." If as Mr. Barber rather suggests there has been no change between the policy put before the Farmers' Club and that advocated at Oxford, for Mr. Wise to put up, and reply to, this objection to his scheme would obviously have been quite pointless. In my article, I did not criticize the change of policy (we have grown too much accustomed to changes of Labour policy for that), but it is perfectly fair to call attention to it, for change undoubtedly there has been.

May I add with regard to the alleged greater instability of prices since the war than before, that at Oxford I submitted to Mr. Wise two curves of monthly Gazette prices for British wheat—one for the five pre-war years, the other for the last five years, undated, and asked him to say from internal evidence which was which, which he declined to do. The latter curve is perhaps a very little the more jumpy, but I do not think that the extra post-war fluctuation is enough to support the weight of argument for changing our whole system which Mr. Wise places upon it.—Yours, &c.,

FRANCIS D. AGLAND.

Killerton, Exeter.

P.S.—I am sorry that Mr. Barber regards my fears of straining Imperial bonds, which would follow upon our enabling the Dominions to blame our Government for any difficulties they might have with regard to the price of their main products and the quantities purchased, as Victorian. My fears are based on a good deal of knowledge of war and post-war difficulties which were definitely early Georgian.

### FREE TRADE

SIR,—I would beg of your space to answer briefly the two comments in this week's issue on my previous letter. "Hard Hit" writes: "Mr. Walker says we must keep our products at the best world level of cheapness and excellence," and asks, "How?" He did not complete the quotation. It goes on, "or take the consequences." I believe no one is any use to the cotton manufacturers who deflects them from the task of agreeing with their employes that together they must either beat the world or lose their world trade. Nor need "Hard Hit" ask me (as politician) how to do it. He and his work-folk must do it or recognize that the world will not pay them and we cannot. It is hard doctrine, but truth.

Mr. Allen, in his letter, answers himself! Economy is the alternative to higher taxation. But if we are to have higher taxation, I advocate direct taxation and Customs and Excise taxation for every reason in preference to the 10 per cent. Protective Tariff. It would be tragedy indeed if we abandoned Free Trade just now, at the moment when Australia and the United States are staging for all the world to see the logical outcome of Protection even under the most favourable conditions.—Yours, &c.,

RONALD F. WALKER.

Fir Cottage, Mirfield.

## MR. SIMON'S "INDISCRETION"

SIR,—It was most gratifying to read Mr. S. F. Miall's outburst of righteous indignation at Mr. E. D. Simon's unpardonable indiscretion. Not only should no criticism be made public, but Parliamentary debates should be withheld from the newspapers. Ultimately the newspapers should be prohibited altogether, and meetings held from time to time to make known to the public that the Liberal cause is righteous and needs no inquiry.

It is doubtless the traditional English love of compromise which makes Mr. Miall advocate so moderate a policy as the suppression of criticism at the Liberal Summer School; but I am sure he will agree with me that the electorate must at all costs be prevented from thinking for themselves.—Yours, &c.,

DONALD HARTLEY.

136, Dukes Avenue, Muswell Hill, N.10.

August 24th, 1930.

## THE WORKERS AND UNEMPLOYMENT

SIR,—There is something singularly maladroitness in the editorial note on the demands of the workers for shorter hours and holidays with pay. The five million productive workers in this country produce what the rest of the community enjoys in the shape of holidays with pay and a number of other accessories.

May I suggest that the editorial staff of *THE NATION* should read the chapter of thanks in Mr. Salt's last book of memories to the workers who have kept him, as they are being kept, in comfort.

The middle and upper classes have been steadily and selfishly, by wage reductions, increasing their share in the last decade of the wealth produced by the five million workers, without whom the wealth of the country would be as nothing. When you talk of the rock of "the dole," why do you never mention the doles of "rent interest and profit," on which more than two millions of the well-to-do are living in this country without doing a hand's turn for it, except possibly writing letters abusing the recipients of seventeen shillings a week? There is only one thing to be said against the dole—namely, that it is a bulwark against revolution. Abolish the dole, root and branch, and then the working classes might be moved to strike at the other dole drawers, from the monarchy down to the club man and woman in Piccadilly.—Yours, &c.,

C. H. NORMAN.

74, Belsize Park Gardens, London, N.W.3.

August 23rd, 1930.

## SIR EDWARD GRIGG

SIR,—None of your readers is likely to think undeserved your correspondent's castigation of Sir Edward Grigg for the amazing speech he made at the opening of the Kenya Legislature. Nor have I anything to add to his account of the speech's background in history. It could not be bettered. But is the moral of that history the one he draws and invites Sir Edward to draw? It is true that Sir Charles Eliot's career was checked for a time when it was discovered that he had played fast and loose with the land of an African tribe. Only six years later another Governor of Kenya was found out doing the very same thing, and paid the same penalty. But surely the important facts are, not that two high officials suffered temporary inconvenience, but that all the areas of tribal land in question, the syndicate's 500 square miles, the 12,000-acre farms of Chamberlain and Flemmer—both most estimable men—and Laikipia, that was taken from the Masai six years later, remained and still remain in European ownership, so that of the best of the land occupied by the tribe thirty years ago, it now retains scarcely any? For all the difference these two forced resignations made, not only to the Masai but to every other tribe in Kenya, the actions of them both might instead have been heartily applauded. And surely the moral is that if these

spoliations are really to be put an end to, for they are still going on, more drastic and determined action must be taken, as to both men and measures? Only a few months ago it was calmly stated in an official report (of the "Committee to inquire into Native Land Tenure in Kikuyu Province") that "a great many" Kikuyu existed in that Province "whose whole Ithaka (clan or family lands) were alienated to Europeans." In a later passage the Report says that these victims of Empire "suddenly found themselves homeless and with no land which they could cultivate in their own right." Since all the Crown land that is capable of cultivation has already been alienated to Europeans, the last of it only last spring, the only way land can be got for the many thousands of landless Africans in Kenya is for the Crown to resume the ownership of some of the alienated land. Will the next Governor of Kenya do that? During the last thirty years we have had half a dozen official statements of policy, all of them breathing the most lofty sentiments of disinterested justice. What is wanted now is not more words but action.—Yours, &c.,

NORMAN LEYS.

Brailsford, near Derby.

August 24th, 1930.

## THE PROBLEM OF INDIA

SIR,—It appears that the report of the Indian Statutory Commission, which by its terms of reference is confined to British India, and to the policy of Mr. Montagu, tends to direct public attention to a part of India only, and to the experiment in representative government which is being made there.

But this is not the only system of government which exists under the British Crown in India.

In part of India—roughly half, excluding Burmah—we have replaced the various indigenous systems of government by a system devised by ourselves, and entirely foreign to India. In the other half—the "native States"—we have allowed the indigenous systems of government to continue under the protection of the Crown, which guarantees the territorial integrity of each State, but leaves it free to manage its own affairs, and follow its natural line of evolution, free from outside interference and the menace of invasion.

Which of these two systems of government has proved the better in actual practice?

While British India is full of political agitation, industrial unrest, and Hindoo-Mahomedan tension, the native States are free from these troubles. They are consistently loyal to the British Crown, and they furnish a large proportion of the combatant troops of the Indian Army.

In educational and industrial progress, many of them compare favourably with British India.

I would suggest, therefore, that instead of forcing upon British India a system of representative government which the people never asked for and do not want, the policy which is so successful in the case of the "native States" should be extended to the whole of India.

It might be difficult, or even impossible, to revive the former ruling houses of British India, but there are about 560 Indian rulers of native States, some of whom might help in this matter by taking over portions of British India.

The demand for "Indianization" would disappear with British India, and services such as the Army, railways, and irrigation, which affect the whole of India, and for which the Crown as paramount power, is, and must remain, responsible, in the interests both of India as a whole, and of the Empire, should be "reserved services" employing British officers exclusively.

This solution of the Indian problem would give India self-government, and at the same time would set its loyalty to the British Crown upon the solid and enduring basis of self-interest. It would also be a step on the way towards the ultimate federation of all the Indian States as a single self-governing Dominion of the British Empire.—Yours, &c.,

H. F. DORAN.

The Dingle, Lower Bourne, Farnham, Surrey.

August 19th, 1930.



### THE RUBBER POSITION

SIR,—In commenting on my letter your City Editor states that the Rubber Growers' Association was responsible for the initial mistake of restriction.

That the Stevenson Restriction Scheme was a "mistake" is simply an unwarranted *ex parte* statement made almost solely by the City Editor of the TIMES without any shadow of truth. His argument simply boiled down to this, that the proper course to pursue was to keep rubber at such a low price that it would not pay anyone to plant.

No planter or group of planters ever opposed the Scheme, although Ceylon was a trifle lukewarm. Now Ceylon planters have telegraphed to the Colonial Office demanding the reimposition of the Scheme in some form.

During the raging, tearing propaganda of the TIMES, it was only able to print one letter from a firm, who were more merchants than planters, against the Scheme, while the leaders of the industry at annual meetings declared themselves whole-heartedly in favour of it.

The Scheme was launched in 1921, when Mr. Churchill was in office. It received the blessing of Mr. J. H. Thomas in the next Administration, and subsequently was enthusiastically supported by Mr. Amery, who tightened it up and made it so absolutely watertight and effective as to raise the wrath of the Americans to whom Mr. Baldwin meekly knuckled down.

From the inauguration of the Scheme in 1921 until the calamitous interference of Mr. Baldwin in February, 1928, the industry enjoyed unbounded prosperity. Every English company paid large dividends, put their estates into first-class condition, and accumulated substantial cash reserves.

It is true that the Dutch and the natives also benefited, and why not? The bazaars hummed with activity, and the whole trading community participated in the general prosperity. Now starvation and bankruptcy are the order of the day.

The Stevenson Scheme was, no doubt, open to modification and improvement in many details, but the troubles of the rubber industry are certainly not due to the Scheme itself, but to the inconceivable ineptitude of its withdrawal. —Yours, &c.,

HUGH F. MITCHELL, J.P.

Tauntons, Caterham-on-the-Hill, Surrey.

August 25th, 1930.

### "POUR ENCOURAGER LES AUTRES"

SIR,—Mr. Bertrand Russell is quite right. I read the TIMES, and I duly noted the case of Mr. Griffin Barry, and many Americans, besides myself, will have done the same. I have changed my plans, and shall not visit England as I intended to do. We can make allowance for the police, who obey regulations, and think they are doing their duty in their blundering way. But why, when the police "opposed bail," did the judge support the opposition?

Your precious "Come-to-Britain Movement" will never succeed until you change your Aliens Regulations.—Yours, &c.,

ALAN B. MATLOCK.

Grand Hotel, Paris.

August 24th, 1930.

### THE TIMES AND THE POLICE

SIR,—Mr. Russell draws attention in your paper to the arrest of Mr. Griffin Barry under the Aliens Order of 1920. As a friend of Mr. Barry, I was dependent upon reports in the TIMES for information on his case. According to Mr. Russell's account, "the police endeavoured to prevent his (Mr. Barry's) friends from coming to his defence by assuring them that the matter was trivial." Yet this trivial local police court case was twice reported in the TIMES.

I now have by me only the second report. In this second report of August 9th Mr. Griffin Barry is referred to either as "Griffin Barry" or as "Barry." His solicitor is referred to as Mr. Spear, and others mentioned in the case are thus dignified.

In contrast to these undignified references to Mr. Barry much prominence is given in the TIMES to statements of the Chief Constable. These place quite another interpretation

on the case to that given by Mr. Russell. For instance, Mr. Russell says that the police "endeavoured to secure the maximum penalty by false accusations of Communist activities, for which they offered no evidence, because there was none." The TIMES, however, gives prominence to the generalized allegations of the Chief Constable, who said that "inquiries had established that the defendant was in close contact with active Communists in this country and in Russia. In 1920 (ten years ago) he had been refused permission to land because of these activities."

Further, Mr. Russell says that the police endeavoured to secure the maximum penalty (£100 fine and/or six months' imprisonment), and "that offers of bail made to the police were not communicated to Mr. Barry." This is the way that the TIMES, in the opening paragraph of its report, deals with this aspect of the case: "Griffin Barry, a United States citizen, who had been remanded in prison owing to bail of £1,000 not being forthcoming, was fined £5 at Plymouth for failing to register under the Aliens Act." The report continues: "The Chief Constable said that if the suggestion was that the police had been unfair and done anything deliberately to refuse bail, he must strongly protest." It is pertinent here to repeat the words, "strongly protest." A sentence was inserted saying that friends all over England had telegraphed that they were willing to put up bail; but there was no reference in the TIMES to the police having refused to communicate this information to Mr. Barry.

What happened in this case is now made clear by your timely publication of Mr. Russell's letter. Mr. Barry was arrested and the high bail was fixed while the police searched his papers, when he was in gaol. Furthermore, this gross interference with Mr. Barry's liberty seems to have been supported by the authority of the TIMES—which does not show the least concern that "a United States citizen" has been submitted to indignity and inconvenience.—Yours, &c.,

R. G. RANDALL.

Salzburg.

August 25th, 1930.

### THE ELGIN TRADITION

SIR,—As the "owner" of the stone dragon from the Porte St. Martin and of the gargyle head from the Cloth Hall at Ypres to whom your correspondent J. B. S. B. refers, may I, through your columns, reply?

Since "The W Plan," of which I am the author, and the production of the film, with which also I was associated, centres its interest in the Ypres Salient, I considered, as did the proprietors of London's largest screen-theatre, that a very proper "background" to the presentation would be the exhibit of war relics which I took some trouble to collect over some years. It proved to be of high interest to many, and was therefore justified.

I have not seen the modern Ypres. No one has ever advertised to me that a desire existed to replace the stones. On the contrary, though I have visited the battle-fields more than once, I avoided Ypres. I knew its stones and tree stumps, and had been told that they had been replaced by the clamour of the souvenir dealer.

The relics I possess were salvaged from the morass of artillery roads wherein they would have been powdered, and are set up in the timber from the Cathedral. During twelve years I have cared for and prized them highly; though more than once I have discussed returning them to Belgium; but to whom? To what?

It was, I may say, a simple matter after the war for me to return through the German Embassy in London the Iron Cross to his kinsmen which I took from the body of a German officer whom I met in combat.

Then, perhaps, through your columns I may ask some authority to write to me, and tell me what appropriate steps I might take, though I should not be impelled by the scarcely veiled sarcasm of a correspondent. After all, the Thames Embankment is decorated by Cleopatra's Needle; the Wallace Collection was none the worse for being private; and our British Museum contains specimens to which other nations might like to urge their claim.—Yours, &c.,

GRAHAM SETON HUTCHISON.

The Old Garden, Hiddingdon, Middlesex.

## A BREATHING-SPACE

**A**T last definite orders had been received: the Battery was to "pull out" the next morning. For some days there had been rumours that the Guns were to be withdrawn and to rejoin the Infantry of their own Division, which had been relieved some time before, and now the order had actually come through from Brigade Headquarters.

Since the opening day of the great Somme "Push," three weeks before, the guns had never been silent, day or night, except when advancing to a new position as the enemy was forced back.

Six guns, or rather, five guns and a heap of scrap-iron, for the flank gun had sustained a direct hit and could no longer be called a gun, were extended in an untidy line across the centre of a shallow valley. They were not dug in, because the fighting had been in the nature of open warfare since they had left the position they occupied on the first day of the "Push," and another advance might be made at any time. The only defence at the guns was afforded by a few sand-bags under the muzzle of each. About fifty yards behind them there were a number of "slit-trenches"—deep holes in the ground which bore a sinister resemblance to graves, except that most of them were considerably longer. Nearer the line of guns was a similar trench with a few sand-bags round its edge, over which several telephone wires disappeared—this formed the Battery office, and was also the place where the telephonists lived and slept, and where the man on duty sat day and night with a pair of ear-phones clamped to his head, ready to receive messages from the O.P. or Brigade.

This Battery position was one of scores of others dotted about the floor or the sides of the valley. The ground between them was thickly pitted with shell-holes, and here and there a broken limber showed where the enemy had had a "lucky one." At the moment things were quiet, though quiet should be taken in its military sense, as every Battery was firing at a slow, deliberate rate, except an 18-pounder Battery on the slope, which had suddenly broken into a fierce rate of fire. It was as if an angry man had been grumble-grumbling to himself until he could contain his passion no longer, and let himself go in a burst of vituperation. However, it very soon calmed down and resumed its former measured tone. Evidently its Observation Officer in his O.P. a mile in front had disposed of or lost the passing target which had caused him to call for "Gun-Fire."

Numerous small parties of Infantry, limbers of ammunition and small-arm carts were moving up and down the valley, while a slow, steady trickle of stretcher-bearers and "walking wounded" from over the crest were making for the casualty clearing-station at its lower end. A few of the enemy's shells were dropping here and there, but there was nothing to prevent the limbers from proceeding on their lawful occasions of bringing up ammunition, or to call for any quickening of the fire of the guns in retaliation. It was not as it had been the day before, when a storm of shell had swept the whole valley, accounting for many casualties, among them the direct hit in D Battery, and the loss of the gun and three men, two of whom would stay behind when the Battery pulled out. Two gunners busy with the erection of wooden crosses indicated where.

Overhead, a row of huge sausage balloons was strung out across the cloudless sky—cloudless except for round woolly balls which appeared suddenly, and almost as quickly were dissipated in whorls of thin mist. The aeroplanes themselves, the objectives of the woolly balls, were hardly visible, except for the flashes of light on their wings as they turned and twisted to escape the threatening shrapnel. Occasional bursts of machine-gun fire overhead showed that

an aerial duel was in progress, but they attracted little attention from the occupants of the valley. Eyes, blood-shot and aching from long staring through field-glasses, or smarting from the effects of the fumes of cordite and tear-gas which hung heavily over the whole valley, could not afford to gaze into a summer sky. The hot air quivered and shook with the reverberation of the guns, and in the intervals the shrill song of larks broke in, incongruously.

The five guns of D Battery were firing steadily with the solid, heavy thump that distinguishes the 4.5 from the sharp crack of the 18-pounder. At each gun, three men in muddy breeches and shirts open at the neck crouched behind the shields, mechanically swinging open the breech, shoving home the shell, then the cartridge, closing the breech and waiting for Number One, who, after a glance at the dial sight, would pull the trigger, and with a "thump" and a jerk the gun would spit the shell out to go screaming away up the valley. Where it went to they neither knew nor cared; it was enough for them that the dial sight was set, and the elevation given as they had been ordered. A rifleman could usually tell what he had done, but the eyes of the Battery were over a mile away, where the Observing Officer with his map and field-glasses sat huddled into the side of a trench or a shell-hole with his telephonist crouched at his feet.

The Senior Subaltern of D Battery crawled out of the "Office" trench. He had been ringing up the O.P. to tell the Major that a message had come from the Brigade to say that they were to move next day. He was a tall, gaunt man of thirty-six or thirty-seven, with a drawn face and bloodshot eyes sunk deep in his head. He took off his tin hat to mop his face, showing his strange hair which had pure white locks among the thickly growing brown, and then carefully replaced his hat and filled a pipe and resumed his stroll up and down behind the guns. His news did not take long to circulate through the Battery—from Officer to Sergeant-Major, from Sergeant-Major to Sergeants, and so to the men at the guns—everyone knew that they were to go out next day. But they did not seem to be much interested. "Bloody good job"; "Time, too"; "We're not out yet," conveyed the general feeling. That the news affected them personally was hardly yet realized.

They had been in the line for over three weeks, an eternity, which had varied from "quiet" times, such as they were having now, to the hell which they had experienced at their former position ten days before. For hours, then, they seemed to have been particularly chosen by the enemy to receive a concentration of every kind and size of shell which he could throw over. Half-naked in the broiling heat, drenched with sweat, suffocated by the poisonous fumes and dust, dazed and deafened by the concussion of close-bursting shells, they had laboured at the guns. The stretchers had been almost as busy as the guns—back and forward between the Battery and the little hollow behind it, the bearers had passed, helping the wounded who could walk, carrying those who could not, and pushing and pulling the dead out of the way so that they should not interfere with the working of the guns. In the evening when comparative peace had settled on the position they had reckoned up their losses. Seven men killed outright, twelve badly and five slightly wounded, and, worst loss of all, the last to be hit was young Tommy East, the most popular officer in the Battery. The fire had almost ceased, only a few whizz-bangs were dropping here and there at wide intervals, and one of these "contemptible little brutes," as the Major said bitterly, killed "one of the finest young officers in the Service." The stout old Padre had come up from Brigade Headquarters that night, and now East lay with his men round him close to the road the Battery would take in the morning.



That had been their worst day, but others had been almost as bad, and half the drivers were up from the wagon-lines, filling the gaps among the gunners, and promotion to "Acting Rank" had been very rapid among the N.C.O.s. And now a spirit of apathy had settled down on the Battery—officers and men—so that even the news that they were going out was powerless to affect them. A slight trembling of the hands showed how nerves had been racked by the constant strain; everyone was more or less deaf, eyes were burning and bloodshot; the Major admitted that he had to make the simplest calculation over and over again, and then was in mortal terror that he was wrong.

It was getting dark in the valley. The Batteries themselves could no longer be distinguished, though their positions were indicated clearly by flashes from the guns. The enemy shells, after a short and fierce acceleration—the evening strafe—were falling at much longer intervals. All round the horizon, like the opening and closing of a shutter, patches of dark sky flashed into light, against which the outlines of the nearer crests were etched in black, while at the upper end of the valley the lines of coloured fire of Verey lights constantly rose and fell.

\* \* \*

By eight o'clock the next morning the Battery was harnessed up and on the move out of the valley. Formed in Battery Column, the guns were extended at wide intervals with each subaltern at his exact distance between the two guns of his section. They might have been taking part in a Field-Day at Aldershot as they paced onward at a slow walk—in accordance with the old tradition of Retiring from Action at a walk.

Though shells were still dropping here and there over the valley and on the ground they were passing over, they made no haste; when a nervous driver touched his horse with the spur, or the horses, fresh from their easy time in the last weeks, broke into a half-trot with a jingle of chains, a quick glance over his shoulder from the Major, or a "Steady, steady," from the Section Commander quickly restrained these signs of impatience. As the end of the valley was reached, a short blast on the whistle and a wave of the hand caused the two flanks to bend in towards each other, and the long line of guns and limbers debouched into the road in "Column of Route." Another wave of the hand, and the immediate production of pipes and cigarettes showed that they were "Marching at Ease."

Day after day the easy leisurely progress to their new sector continued through the leafy by-ways and peaceful villages of Picardy; there was no sign that the country was at war, except that there were very few men about in the fields and villages. As the route hardly touched the main roads, they did not see many other troops, but at one halt they shared a village for two days with a Squadron of *Chasseurs d'Afrique*. The smart little dark men seemed to spend most of their time fishing in the canal, or lounging about their billets, accompanied by their beautiful grey Arab horses, who followed them about like dogs. It was quite a common sight to see the graceful white head of a horse thrust out of the window while the man leaned in the doorway of the cottage which was their common billet, or a group of three or four would be sitting motionless on the bank of the canal, each with his horse gravely looking over his head, to all appearances as much interested in the fishing as his master.

When the Battery entered the deserted streets of Arras to take up the position they were to occupy, the horses, in the pink of condition, stepped out freely and briskly, the harness and guns had regained something of a well-cared-for appearance, and the men themselves, clean and shaven,

bronzed with the sun, with bright buttons and smart though dusty clothing, were in the highest spirits.

Their way led them to what was apparently a residential part of the town—handsome two- and three-storied houses set in tree-bordered streets and squares which showed very little damage from the enemy's fire. Streets and houses, however, had a totally deserted look; there was not a civilian to be seen, and though a few British troops were moving about, on the whole, Arras was a City of the Dead. Very little gunfire could be heard either on our side or the enemy's. It seemed indeed a quiet front they had come to.

An hour or two later the Officer's Mess had been established in one of the large houses beside some public gardens. The owners had evidently left in a great hurry. Nothing had been disturbed in the handsome rooms; even the china, glass, and cutlery were intact, and the clocks, which were wound up by one of the subalterns immediately on arrival, ticked cheerfully on the mantel-pieces.

The Battery took up a position in the public gardens outside, where, squatting like toads in the incongruous surroundings of flower-beds and ornamental shrubs, the guns themselves seemed to have a smug, self-satisfied expression on their grim muzzles.

ALLAN MACGREGOR.

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

### "Let Us Be Gay," Lyric Theatre.

THE Americans—and it is to their credit—take sex more seriously than we do, at any rate, upon the stage. "Let Us Be Gay," at the Lyric, is one of the innumerable American plays which attempt to reflect the modern crisis in sexual morals—a task from which the Censorship frightens most English dramatists. Miss Crothers has some sense of the theatre, but she lacks style deplorably, and the more serious passages in her comedy are embarrassingly sentimental and Green Hattish. Moreover she sets her action among a set of rich people so vulgar and futile that it is difficult to take any interest in their destinies. However, the play contains some delicious American jokes, which Miss Bankhead got the most out of. Unluckily her enunciation was often very faulty, and though I am used to an American accent I could not catch many of her words from the fourth row of the stalls. Mr. Arthur Margetson did not give a very happy rendering of the chief male part, but Miss Helen Haye provided the best performance of the evening as one of those determined, sensible, and downright old ladies of whom dramatists are so fond; Miss Haye is decidedly one of the most accomplished and intelligent actresses on the English stage. "Let Us Be Gay" may be a success because a certain public thinks it daring; artistically it is a failure, because it is so conventional. But I can faintly praise it by calling it a more entertaining show than most.

### "The Barretts of Wimpole Street," Malvern Festival.

This is the sort of play that makes one regret more than ever the debasement of the adjectival coinage. Thrilling, lovely, marvellous, exquisite, brilliant, all these are words which apply to one or another of its aspects, but one cannot now use them without either harping on their true meaning or doing scant justice to the author, Mr. Rudolf Besier. His dominating character, Edward Moulton-Barrett, magnificently played by Mr. Cedric Hardwicke, is an astonishing study of grim, self-righteous "Victorianism," tyrannical to the point of insanity, but qualified and made human by a delicately hinted-at taint of actual insanity, of "daughter-complex," as I suppose we should call it nowadays. A life of narrowness and repression, coupled with enormous strength of will and personality, has induced in him a determination that the iniquities of sex, as exemplified in marriage, shall never beset his daughters, over whom he exercises an arbitrary, ruthless, and cruel authority.

But amid all this Mr. Besier has somehow imbued him with a genuine affection for one, at least, of his family, which makes him a man instead of a monster. That is one side of the picture. On the other are ranged the ten surviving children, from whom stand out Elizabeth and Henrietta, who alone dare to defy their father, and their respective lovers. Elizabeth is perhaps the best drawn character in the play. Her courage, her gaiety, her moral and intellectual strength, and her physical weakness, are all indicated with artistic truth both in the broad, sweeping lines of their construction and in the telling detail with which they are elaborated. Miss Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies's acting of the part embraced all this, together with the appearance and "smile like a sunbeam" of Mary Russell Mitford's description. Browning himself is not quite so satisfactory a portrait, but largely, I think, because of Mr. Scott Sunderland's performance, which rightly made him "not in the least like a damned literary gent," but erred rather on the side of the unimaginative and sergeant-majorish; the actor seemed not to appreciate the full implication of some of his lines. A salutary reflection prompted by the play is that, good as it is, it is bound to have a long run when it comes to London next month; for the generality of playgoers will regard it purely as a love story—and a very lovely love story it is. And old Mr. Barrett, though his Freudian subtleties may be missed by some, need not mar the play's effect by having a more easily perceived comic side. And best of all, every honest playgoer will rejoice in the rebellion of Henrietta, of which Miss Marjorie Mars lays hold with a rich and just enjoyment in which no one can fail to participate.

**"The Bond," Everyman Theatre.**

"So pity the poor drunkard's child," Miss Elsa Lan- chester used to sing; and for the first two acts of her play Miss Muriel Stuart would have us do the same. We cannot, however, respond. It is all very well to demand sympathy when the child is indeed suffering, but these children are so entirely selfish and self-centred that one merely wishes their father as many pints as he has a mind to. One would, that is, if one were able to believe in them at all, which indeed one is not. For Miss Stuart displays a quite astonishing lack of insight into the minds of the generation she would criticize, and her whole argument is based on utterly false foundations. The children tell their father that he has "spoilt their lives," adding with a naiveté that is their author's rather than their own that he has "made people talk about them." And the only solution which occurs either to them, their father, their mother, or Miss Stuart, is that the wretched man shall "go away," leaving his wife whom he loves and who loves him. Whereas it is obvious to everybody in the audience that the whole family, children most of all, would be infinitely better off if the children "went away," as all "modern" children in such circumstances would have done, assuming that their father's inebriate habits would have worried them in the least. However, he goes, and when in the last act we follow him into his retirement the play all but comes to life. We perceive that our liking for the father, which we had perhaps attributed to Mr. Guy Newall's pleasant interpretation of him, is due to his being a charming fellow; that his wife (Miss Moyna MacGill, looking about four years younger than her daughter) is not such a fool as her acceptance of her children's tyranny had led us to suppose, and that Miss Stuart, when she gets away from that Sunday-paper younger generation, can after all create real character, as is shown by her Mrs. Crust, played with gusto and rustic understanding by Miss Amy Veness.

**"Raffles," Tivoli.**

One should be an American to appraise this film properly. Everybody in an English audience knows all about A. J. Raffles's hobby of burglary, practised because it is the only thing in the world that gives him the perfect thrill. For us, then, it is absurd for the director to waste time disclosing the fact. All we want to see is Raffles bringing off a coup, Raffles falling in love, Raffles being found out by his girl, Raffles being caught by Mackenzie, and Raffles, with the aid of his girl, getting clean away. We do see

all this; but we have also to mark time while the Americans are realizing what we knew from the start, and marking time is no fit occupation for the film fan. What is even more surprising, and no less irritating, is that the film makes hardly any attempt to show us Raffles the cricketer, Raffles the society man, Raffles the hero of Bunny, plunges straight into the particular episode in his career of cracksmanship with which it deals. It would surely have been wiser to make the film a composition of several of the Raffles stories, developing character the while, and showing us something of the man as well as the burglar. As it is, the spectator, be he versed or unversed, is laboriously delayed in his discovery of the real Raffles, and at the same time asked to take for granted all the background which is the essence of his attraction. It is true that we are given perfunctory glimpses of cricket matches and the like, but no importance is attached to them, and one never associates Raffles with anything but burglary. The "English atmosphere," despite the inclusion of several English actors in the cast, is solidly transatlantic, and even Mr. Ronald Colman, who plays Raffles, is far too much the clean-limbed American. Mr. Sidney Howard's dialogue, coming from the author of "The Silver Cord," is curiously undistinguished.

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Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, August 30th.—

"The Apple Cart" and "Getting Married," Malvern Festival.

Dances and Festive Music of the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries, Haslemere Festival, 8.

Reopening of the Children's Theatre, Endell Street.

Maria Sandra, Leyland White, and Elsa Karen, Promenade Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.

Mozart Concert from Salzburg, the Wireless, 8.

Monday, September 1st.—

"The Far-Off Hills," by Mr. Lennox Robinson, Everyman Theatre.

"The House of Pretence," by Mr. Roy Jordan, Embassy Theatre.

"Richard III.," at the New Theatre.

Bach Concert, Haslemere Festival, 8.

Birmingham Repertory Season opens.

Tuesday, September 2nd.—

"The Devil's Disciple," at the Savoy.

Wednesday, September 3rd.—

"Eldorado," at Daly's.

Italian Music, Haslemere Festival, 8.

Thursday, September 4th.—

Charlot's Masquerade, at Cambridge.

OMICRON.

## DEWDROPS

ELIXIR, yellow, red and blue,  
Dazzling drops of life immortal!  
Fallen stars are sprinkled dew  
That brightest shine at daylight's portal.  
And ye who seek the panacea  
Of human ills in nectar wine,  
And ye to whom long life is dear  
And eternal life divine—  
Creep out at dawn and fix your eye  
On a sole dewlamp most bright,  
Whose concentration of the sky  
Contains the strands of radiant light;  
And as the earth moves round her sun,  
Move slowly round his concentration,  
And thou wilt find the holy one  
Contains the seeds of separation.  
Red and orange, yellow, green,  
Blue and lastly violet,  
The trinity with shades between  
Doth the magic vial beget.  
Approach the lamp and thou wilt find  
The fairy drop is colourless:  
Shatter then a thing so blind,  
And know thy hopes are nothingness.

ROMILLY JOHN.



## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

### ON GOING TO THE WARS

WHEN one looks back on the war period, which is not a mere matter of reading the latest volume of fiction on the subject, one is apt to be distressed by the thought that the spirit of the time may be estimated in future, or by the present generation, through the noisiest expressions of the time. Indeed, one would be horrified to see a collection of the things that were said in heavy type, the cartoons that were scrawled across our minds, and in general all that blatant beastliness which was called "Hate" and even "Patriotism." They would appear partly comic, but mainly their hideousness and hysteria would destroy any smile on the face of the retrospector. What a world! The new generation perhaps leaves the matter at that point, and passes on, with a brief thought that their elders were homicidal lunatics, to the occupations, or recreations, of sense and improved consciousness.

\* \* \*

Yet the discovery that war is a pandemonium and a pestilence, to be avoided, is not one of the glories reserved for the recent emancipation. It often occurred to me on the Western Front that the Army was really an army of conscientious objectors. Reserve your instant crushing retort. Who is perfect in his conscience even in the warfare of peace? Who can so choose and measure and control his actions as to be the pattern of all patience, to effect an object consistently without harm to others, to shed (if the figure may pass) no innocent blood? Who can be sure of making a right decision in a sudden urgency of conflicting claims? This I am sure of; nine out of ten men who went over the top were as great lovers of peace and of their fellow-men as anyone who was not there. The tenth man might be a wild bandit-like being, who is occasionally encountered even now. I met him in the corridor of the boat-train the other day. He was slashing away at another (and smaller) gentleman whom he described as a "b—y Hun," and who was rescued by the public and removed for safety to another part of the train. He had never seen this gentleman before, but was feeling like a little self-expression.

\* \* \*

As an antidote to the journalism of the Great War, and as a means of understanding the missing generation and the values which they endeavoured to balance in going to the wars, Mr. Laurence Housman's anthology, "War Letters of Fallen Englishmen" (Gollancz, 7s. 6d.), should be consulted without delay. The remnant of the missing generation should be very grateful to Mr. Housman for having thought of this book and for completing the heavy, painful, and, no doubt, sometimes embarrassing work of selecting its contents. It makes possible a more intimate acquaintance with the spirit of 1914-18 than can easily be won elsewhere. The evidence is confidential and contemporary. Writing letters on active service is, to be sure, or was, a puzzling art. The censor *did* sometimes open letters, and he disliked exactitude and protest. But there was a censorship besides his—your own, and the recipient's. You were not usually inclined to dwell on unpleasant facts, one of which might explode in your face while you wrote; and the number of those to whom you could report and reflect freely without being misunderstood or causing apparently useless dejection was no larger than usual. In spite of such repressive circumstances, excellent, truth-telling letters were written, and here they are, some of them—a private view of England's war now that "information of military value" is obsolete.

The "1914 Spirit" was prevalent until the battle of the Somme. It was unrealistic, and pathetically impulsive. It had notions of gonfalons and crusades, and "the greater game." It accepted the fact that war had arrived, and the opportunity to imitate Lovelace and Horatius. Poetically, it conjectured a sphere of Honour, purer than life had been already, radiant with unselfish purpose. And who will condemn that spirit at that time? Its great error lay in its modesty; for it surrendered its faculty of reason to those powers which, officially, understood why we were fighting. The smell of high explosive, and the brutal results of it on bodies and humanities, broke into the region of the "1914 Spirit." Hear voices of young officers in 1915:—

"Yet under heavy shell-fire it was curious to look into their eyes—some of them little fellows from shops, civilians before, now and after: you perceived the wide, rather frightened, piteous wonder in their eyes, the patient look turned towards you, not, 'What the blankety, blankety hell is this?' but 'Is this quite fair? We cannot move, we are all little animals. Is it quite necessary to make such infernally large explosive shells to kill such infernally small and feeble animals as ourselves?'"

"It's a queer thing, but my impression of all this mighty business is the utter smallness of it all, the infinite smallness; the meaningless orders, obeyed by brainless heads, all willing to do their little best, until some tiny men cart them off to a little grave behind one of the small houses one uses for headquarters. I can't explain what I mean, but quite literally it all seems far smaller to me than prize-giving, or sports day at school. The Magnificats of journalism serve to show it smaller still. I think in all the world the smallest must be government, but certainly war is scarcely less small."

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The men who could write with so much insight and such imagery (and the book is mainly of this standard) had no time to make their names; but among the letter-writers one finds men already distinguished when they became soldiers. F. H. Keeling is followed by T. M. Kettle. Both were able to master the situation and to utter prophecies in unimprovable letters; another correspondent of splendid personality and intelligence is C. H. Sorley, the poet. Perhaps his letters are even more intense in impression than his poems, and they bring one's recognition of the worth and genius destroyed by the war to an extreme poignancy. Sir Victor Horsley (who died in Mesopotamia at the age of fifty-nine) is seen all too briefly in two fragments of letters, full of sympathy for the soldier and accurate criticism of the national method; next to his letters stand two from Brigadier-General Philip Howele, C.M.G., a Regular soldier, killed in 1916. One of these, the writer's position considered, is peculiarly revealing. "It is *vile* that all my time should be devoted to killing Germans whom I don't in the least want to kill. If all Germany could be united in one man and he and I could be shut up together just to talk things out, we could settle the war, I feel, in less than one hour." The war had then more than three years to go. The Howeles were not numerous enough to abbreviate it, and their immediate business went on day and night, denying occasions to work out the problem of loyalties and consequences until they were killed. They served the country as men of action; their utterances as men of heart will sweeten the history of that country in its most embittered state.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

## REVIEWS

## AN AMIABLE ATHEIST

**Company I Have Kept.** By HENRY S. SALT. (Allen & Unwin. 10s.)

MR. SALT explains the peculiar nature of his autobiography. The book is not intended to be autobiographical. "Its subject is the company kept, not the person who has kept it." From this point of view the book is a complete failure. The person who kept the company is the interesting figure, and necessarily so. And Mr. Salt unwittingly, perhaps, reveals himself as the sweetest, gentlest, and most chivalrous of men. There are things about Mr. Salt's life one would wish otherwise. He was much more fond of Eton, where, *mirabile dictu*, he was for some time a master, than he was of King's, which he seems never to have visited since he went down. But, then, eccentricity seems to have dogged his path even as an Eton master. "I met, at my father-in-law's house, the two well-known revivalists, Messrs. Moody and Sankey, who were permitted to address an audience of Eton boys. I was introduced as 'another Eton master,' which at once drew the remark, 'Well, we are all working for the Great Master, I suppose.'" Mr. Salt did not remain a very long time an Eton master. It is far better, he found, to be an Eton boy.

No doubt, he found his position displeasing in part owing to a very pronounced characteristic. Mr. Salt is easily bored, and gives some good examples of people who have bored him. The late H. M. Hyndman was, it appears, a tremendous bore, who could not keep quiet even in a tunnel. Those who share with Mr. Salt a facility for being bored must often have been surprised at the small rôle played by boredom in autobiographies. Perhaps it is that nearly all autobiographers belong to the order of bores. Very early in life Mr. Salt had segregated the conception of boredom. As a small child "my discovery was quickened by a fragment of conversation, which I overheard between my mother and a visitor, who wished to obtain a footing in the house for an admirable curate. 'Oh, but he is such a good little man,' the lady was saying, 'I am sure you would not mind his running in and out.' The reply was, 'We should not at all mind his running out, but we should very much object to his running in.' I noted the distinction." There appear to have been no bores in the Salt family.

Mr. Salt has had a great enthusiasm for De Quincey, and met De Quincey's daughter. The two became great friends, and Mr. Salt prints some very interesting letters about De Quincey from this daughter. But perhaps the best story is hardly about De Quincey at all. "An old lady in an hotel asked me if I was 'in any way connected with the author of that name.' I said, 'Yes, his daughter'; to which she replied, 'I don't see how that can be, for I do not think he had any children. I never heard he had.'" It is the very accent of Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

Mr. Salt is an enthusiastic vegetarian and enemy of blood sports. Still he has his preferences. He likes cats more than dogs. "With cats, I have been more familiar than with dogs, for though it was never my intention to keep a cat, least of all a female, I have several times been 'adopted' by one, and as they have been in every case long-lived, I have for many years known what it is to be overcatted." What a charming picture!

Some of Mr. Salt's enthusiasms, both personal and literary, I find it difficult to share. The easily bored are bored by different people; and I am certain I should have found some of Mr. Salt's friends insufferable bores. But fortunately we are not all alike. Mr. Salt has kept up his love of the classics. He prefers Virgil to Homer.

On birds, flowers, and animals, Mr. Salt is always delightful, and also on eccentric meetings. George Adams, Edward Carpenter's friend, the least clerical looking of men, was travelling in a crowded railway carriage with a tipsy man, who, in spite of denials, insisted in addressing him as "Mr. Parson." Finally, to George Adams's relief, he got out of the train, but "reappeared, popped his head in at the window, and cried out, 'Well,

good-bye, Mr. Parson. And when you die, I hope you will go to hell, and take your damned congregation with you!'"

Mr. Salt, though he has always been in minorities, is devoid of spleen; and this book, which is not to be called an autobiography, is as gentle as it is unpretentious and delightful.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

## A POPULAR BISHOP

**Discourses and Letters of Hubert Murray Burge, D.D., K.C.V.O.**  
Edited, with a Memoir, by LORD CHARNWOOD. (Chatto & Windus. 12s. 6d.)

HE was the sort of man who was bound, as our parents would have said, to "do well." His industry, his cleverness, his accomplished oratory—he was not only an eloquent preacher, but an admirable after-dinner speaker—the soundness and moderation of his ecclesiastical views, his geniality, and charm of manner—in fact his whole personality—marked him for promotion; and though promotion in his earlier years seemed slow in coming, for his degree at Oxford had not been particularly good, it came generously at last. If he had only lived a little longer—he died alas! before he was sixty-three—to what episcopal heights might he not have risen? In any other honourable walk of life—in medicine, for instance, or at the Bar—he would probably have been equally successful. But whatever were the chances by which Hubert Burge became in turn a schoolmaster and a Bishop, he did both jobs supremely well. Some of his friends, indeed, were at first surprised at the fervour of his religious faith; for he was not ordained till he was thirty-five, and then "presumably," as his biographer says, "it was the prospect of being called to be the head of some great school that determined him to be a clergyman." But once the decision was made he had no misgivings. It was this apparent simplicity of mind, combined with his wonderful charm of manner—a charm that sometimes seemed a little excessive, but became at last a second nature to him—that made him so popular a Bishop.

The main facts of his career are as simple as his character. From a scholarship at Bedford School he proceeded to a scholarship at University College, Oxford, and then after a few years spent as an assistant master at Wellington returned to his college as Fellow and Tutor. Finally, at the age of thirty-six, having taken Orders the previous year, he married Miss Bright, the daughter of the Master. His future, so it seemed, was now assured. At this point, however, there occurred what might almost be called the only shadow of criticism—and it was, after all, a very slight one—in his successful career. He had accepted—rather unwisely, as his friends thought—the Headmastership of Repton; for, though Repton is, no doubt, an excellent institution, it is not one of the most famous of our public schools. Less than six months afterwards a new offer came to him. He was invited to be Headmaster of Winchester, and it was rumoured that he meant to accept the invitation. The men of Repton were surprised, disappointed, indignant. Was Repton to be regarded as a mere stepping-stone? Was all the new spirit which he had infused into the life of the school during the five months of his Headship to go for nothing? Had not he said at the time of his appointment that he intended to remain with them a reasonable time? Was five months a reasonable time? But Burge felt that his duty lay at Winchester. He was himself, he lamented, "sadly deficient in ambition," but he added that a man needs the stimulus of ambition, and if he has not got it, he "must school himself very strictly." So he schooled himself to go to Winchester. After ten years of useful work at Winchester there came the offer of the Bishopric of Southwark which he was urged alike by the Prime Minister and the Archbishop to accept. Once more he schooled himself to enter upon what proved, says Lord Charnwood, to be "the hardest stage of his life. . . . Accomplished man of the world as he became, he was none the less growing to be a saint"; and it was no surprise when, at the age of fifty-seven, he was translated to the more important See of Oxford.

But less than six years later a new call came to him.



Early in June, 1925, while he was suffering from a slight illness, he received the news that the King had conferred on him the Knighthood of the Royal Victorian Order; and "the announcement gave him all that pleasure which his great sense of loyalty made natural." Suddenly, however, as it seemed, on June 10th—before he had even received the Insignia of his Knighthood—he died.

The discourses and sermons that make up the bulk of this book are of no great interest, and the letters, pleasant as they are, are not remarkable; but Lord Charnwood's memoir of his friend—though he is inclined to overrate the importance of his subject—is very skillfully done.

PHILIP MORRELL.

### FARQUHAR

**The Works of George Farquhar.** Edited by CHARLES STONEHILL. Two vols. (Nonesuch Press. 45s., or £4 4s.)

To the townsman all sheep look alike, and to the man ignorant of Restoration drama, all the comedies of the period seem much the same. But once you begin to look closely, the differences begin to appear; and if you look closely enough you will discover that Farquhar is not really a "Restoration" dramatist at all: he belongs to the age of Erewhon Butler and Mr. Bernard Shaw. Like Mr. Shaw, and many another Anglo-Irishman, he mixed sentimentality with a hard acuteness of vision, and used the mixture to blow up everyday assumptions. One is continually reminded of Butler or Shaw: "There is no scandal like rags, nor any crime so shameful as poverty"; but for the phrasing, any of the three might have written that. "The gentleman, indeed, behaved himself like a gentleman; for he drew his sword and swore, and afterwards laid it down and said nothing": it is the sword, not the sentiment, that gives the author away. And which of them wrote "The patient's faith goes further towards the miracle than your prescription"?

Farquhar, in fact, was a pre-Voltaire Voltairian: there were, of course, others in his day, there have been such ever since Lucian at least, but he was the only one of that age who wrote for the stage. That is really what distinguishes him from his predecessors, and indeed from his successors, much more than his supposed greater realism. In many ways, indeed, he was not so realistic as Congreve, breaking back as he did to Elizabethan burlesque. The point usually made about him is that his treatment of sex was different: Mr. Palmer says he finally ruined the Restoration tradition by carrying the luscious treatment of sex still further than Vanbrugh: William Archer found him cleaner and more rational. As a matter of fact he was no more luscious than many previous writers, Shadwell or Mrs. Behn, but, of course, he was so in comparison with Congreve because Congreve is not luscious at all. Whether, again, he was more rational is doubtful, though he certainly expressed certain things more directly. "You and your wife, Mr. Guts," one of his characters says, "may be one flesh, because ye are nothing else; but rational creatures have minds that must be united"; but, after all, is not that the whole point of the Mirabel-Millamant scenes in "The Way of the World"?

It is said, moreover, that Farquhar is more realistic—nearer to life but further removed from literature, Gosse somewhat strangely put it: it is true that in his words there is a closer adherence to everyday idiom, but the whole of his structure, his *brio* in the use of words, imparts a kind of ballet movement (needing no stressing on the stage, but the stage is incorrigible) which removes his work from realism in the most amazing way. He is so close to life that he can clutch hold of masses of it and fly off into the upper ether: the clouds form, the lightning plays (as where the thief refuses to say a prayer when threatened with death because "the Government has provided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions") and the thunder is heard as a huge burst of laughter. He is full of a Rabelaisian gaiety, not smutty gaiety, but that which comes from a real seriousness. "He makes us laugh from pleasure oftener than from malice," Hazlitt wrote, and that is true. He died before he was thirty: had he lived he was likely

to have produced that high comedy which comes only from experience and the deepest feeling.

Mr. Stonehill, who confines his introduction to biographical matter, gives succinctly all the relevant facts of Farquhar's life, and includes a short life of Wilks the actor. He has been blamed for misdating Farquhar's death by three weeks—three whole weeks, dreadful error! which does not make a fig of difference, seeing that the legend of his dying on his benefit night was at any rate already exploded: but William Archer had quoted the parish register wrongly, and one must trust one's authorities sometimes. Mr. Stonehill is the first to make a complete collection of Farquhar's works. Except for the plays, and the Discourse upon Comedy, which is already well known (though Mr. Stonehill says it deserves more attention than it gets, it really says nothing other critics of the day did not say, only it says it perhaps more lightly), the other works are interesting rather than good: it was necessary to include them, the student will need them, but the general reader will skim them lightly, and so read they are not bad reading. The edition maintains the usual Nonesuch standard of excellence in typography and general lay-out, and there is the customary helpful addition of sources, stage history, and notes, the last somewhat uneven in quality, now a little lazy, now irrelevantly swollen, but on the whole adequate. Farquhar is certainly worthy of inclusion in this nobly planned series.

BONAMY DOBRÉE.

### WATERTIGHT COMPARTMENTS—WITH HOLES IN THEM

**The Intelligent Man's Guide to Marriage and Celibacy.** By JUANITA WHITEFIELD TANNER. (Methuen. 10s. 6d.)

**Critique of Love.** By FRITZ WITTELS. (Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

**The Retreat from Parenthood.** By JEAN AYLING. (Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d.)

**Matters That Matter.** By HENRIETTA O. BARNETT, D.B.E. (Murray. 7s. 6d.)

**Childishness: A Study in Adult Conduct.** By CYRIL SCOTT. (Bale, Sons & Danielsson. 2s. 6d.)

It is not exclusively a modern habit to break small sticks off the tree of knowledge and attempt to beat the world with them, or more aptly to pare them down to the shape of a baton and set about conducting the universal orchestra; but publishing facilities have given the habit unwarranted scope. Mr. Cyril Scott reminds us of the foreigner who said: "The first thing an Englishman says after breakfast is 'Let's go out and kill something.'" The authors of such books as those named above give the impression of having said: "Let's go out and find something to reform." The problem in each case has been not so much how to do it, as to what to set about doing, and the bogey which comes in for most of the chasing is "the future welfare of the human race." But there is a lamentable lack of co-ordination in the chase. In these books, for instance, which deal largely with the relation of the parent to the child, there is no agreement as to whether a policy of "more babies" or one of "less babies" is demanded. And as the peg on which each one of the authors hangs a book consists of the acceptance as a truism of some such all-embracing policy, it is impossible to steer a middle course between them. They are like watertight compartments, unaware that they are not, alone and most creditably, bearing up the sinking ship: and not only do they differ as to the best method of salvage, but even more as to the nature of the ship itself. Juanita Whitefield Tanner states categorically that "Sex is fundamentally a physical characteristic, and for this reason it must be, to an intelligent person, fundamentally unimportant." Fritz Wittels is equally categorical: "Eros, God of Love, drives all the wheels of culture and reveals himself as the primeval power of the universe in a thousand forms." Juanita Whitefield Tanner (*i.e.*, daughter of Ann Whitefield and John Tanner in "Man and Superman") has written an entertaining book, if rather a glib one. It is dated from New York City, and perhaps its chief delight is in its references to "grandfather" (G. B. S.). Indeed, the

quotations from him make one laugh so loud that the rest of the book seems thin in comparison.

Fritz Wittels is a disciple of Freud, to whom his book is dedicated. "Critique of Love" covers no new ground, except by its examples, and it is a trifle superfluous. Not so superfluous, however, as Jean Ayling's "The Retreat from Parenthood." Appalled by the way in which "doctors and lawyers, scientists and civil servants, engineers and educationalists, artists and architects have curtailed their fertility" during the last twenty or thirty years she sets about finding out why, and making a series of proposals for their future management. The book shows a remarkable capacity for docketing, but a complete lack of imagination about anything but *facts*. The excuses for singling out the professional classes for "rationalization" are quite inadequate. "If Daddy has activities which flourish best in solitude, his study will await him, warmed, cleaned, and ventilated, with hot and cold water laid on, a main drainage connection and a special R. D. cavity for manuscripts or canvases or pamphlets or entomological specimens which he no longer wants." Cézanne used to throw his canvases up into trees, or leave them in the fields when he had finished with them. Had he been a rationalized parent he would no doubt have used the R. D. cavity.

There is far more of the true reformer's zeal and capacity in Dame Barnett; and her "Matters That Matter," a collection of articles from the Press, lectures, and broadcast talks does at least deal with people and not with automata and abstractions. It does tackle existing problems, rather than create new problems to be "organized." Dame Barnett would shock Jean Ayling terribly: "Now, let us each think of a dear baby we know. Have you thought of one? . . . I have. Now, with our dear baby in our mind, let us think what he or she wants to be."

"Childishness" is an amplification of: "With few exceptions, lost like needles in haystacks, the world is peopled with millions of souls who, despite their age and stature, behave like children in the nursery." It is well written, with a sense of proportion, but occasional brawling. The "Scattered Reflections" at the end are bathetic, and would be better left out (e.g., "Pseudo-tolerance—To be charitable towards the faults of others is easy so long as they do not clash with one's own faults.").

JOHN PIPER.

### A CRAFTSMAN ON HIS CRAFT

**Sunday Mornings.** By J. C. SQUIRE. (Heinemann. 6s.)

THERE are three categories of serious reviewers. There are those who tell us all about themselves and little about the author they are reviewing. An exasperating though often amusing tribe. There are those who tell us all about the book they review, but nothing about themselves. They are frequently useful, but always unexciting people. Lastly, there are they who revealing themselves in every line they write still stick to their subject, and are consequently entertaining as well as informative. Within these categories there are discernible, of course, innumerable variants, in mood, in manner, in temper, and in temperament. Nevertheless, the princes of the craft are all to be found in the third category, and among them, of course, Mr. J. C. Squire. Here is a second selection from his weekly contributions to the *OBSERVER*, in which those who know him not as reviewer may taste his quality, and those who do may enjoy again the felicities of his thought and manner, and—the reviews being a selection, and the selector one who is probably his own severest judge—without wondering, as we who meet him every Sunday occasionally wonder, why he chose some particular book for review. The worst of Mr. Squire is, you simply have to read him; even though the man he introduces to you may be the last man in the world whom you desire to meet on the day of rest. Here, however, the company is good and none the worse for being mixed.

Mr. Squire takes a liberal view of the reviewer's task, which, he seems to tell us, is to seek and discover to others merits that might otherwise be overlooked. If criticism be the finding of faults, he does most of his criticism privily, and his bitterest method is the cut direct. He never, so far

as one can remember, seizes upon a book he dislikes to cut it up. He just cuts it dead and says nothing about it. Yet strangely enough, the present selection opens with criticism pure and simple, and the book chosen is that new Prayer-book which was "deposited" not long since amid a hubbub of recrimination, that is in no way reflected in the literary investigation to which Mr. Squire subjects it. Not doctrine but power of thought and expression is the criterion by which the alterations are judged, and there is not one complaint lodged against the authors of the revision that will not be endorsed by all those who love the sonority and the soundness of Jacobean English. Again comes criticism, this time of "The Cambridge Shorter Bible," in which certain of the omissions are severely censured. These exceptions to Mr. Squire's rule are, however, not so exceptional as they seem. Here are two books that Mr. Squire loves, and they have been mutilated; the rebuke is as necessary as it is just. The writing of a bad book is generally a peccadillo that is best overlooked and forgotten. The mangling of a masterpiece is a crime that must be condemned.

For the rest there is review after review, full of generous and discriminating praise, lit by humour and understanding. Mr. Squire is a poet first, and then a man of letters, but neither as the one nor the other is he a recluse, as you will see as you read through this selection. He can meet his men on their own ground, feel the war with Mr. Blunden and Mr. Sassoon, write with gusto of inns, and circuses, and clowns, and showmen, be a poet with the poets, and a sport with the sportsmen, and a dramatist with the dramatists. Among the reviews, sometimes in association with a book, sometimes standing alone, there are several obituaries of men distinguished in the world of letters, and among them there is one that is a masterpiece in its kind, a memory of Oscar Browning that is as shrewd and witty as it is generous and kind. If you would discover Mr. Squire's attitude to literature as literature, turn to "The Modern Novel," and there in one review is the reviewer's theory in a nutshell; the craftsman, honouring his craft, and the observance of its rules wheresoever it may be found.

F. A. CLEMENT.

### NEW NOVELS

**The One Who is Legion, or A. D.'s After-Life.** By NATALIE CLIFFORD BARNEY. (Partridge. 22s. 6d.)

**Miss Mole.** By E. H. YOUNG. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)

**When the Melody is Finished.** By NORMAN TOWER. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)

**The Magic Seas.** By RICHARD LE GALLIENNE. (Toulmin. 7s. 6d.)

**Keith of Kinnellan.** By AGNES MURE MACKENZIE. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)

**The Wooden Woman.** By ALEXANDER TOWNSEND. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)

STANDARDS in novel writing have gone. Chaos has returned. But we are not left entirely without hope. Sanity must win. Even worshippers at the shrine of Mr. Joyce would take their children from the school where the works of Miss Gertrude Stein were the models. At the risk of appearing old-fashioned in accepting Conrad's austere dictum that a work of art that aspires, however humbly, to the condition of art should carry its justification in every line, and Anatole France's that simplicity is the first rule and the last, we feel that possibly there is something in it, just as we feel instinctively that a house is all the better for having a roof on it; and that a motor-car with brakes complete is safer than one not so provided. Safety first, please. Anarchism in writing is as fearsome as anarchism on the road. Once we thought the reading of a novel was a form of distraction from the pressing duties of life. It is no longer amusement: soon it will be numbered with the learned professions.

What are we to understand when Miss Barney says: "Adultery, our dull alternative. . . . Give pleasure to that Pierrot banjoing on a moon that is not bright enough to discover even our bed-slippers—so why get up to let him in?" Although beautifully produced and printed, "The One Who is Legion" is a perplexing book. Here Shades and Shadows re-enter the bodies of the newly dead. The symbols Miss Barney uses are unparalleled examples of esotericism: "Our



arched ribs became a cathedral's flying buttresses, and our voice an organ, and our love a stoned angel . . . our lover's arms stretched out to her, wider than the crucified arms of Christ." Did the author really want to make the reader feel like a boned herring?

It is a relief to turn to "Miss Mole." Here there is no knitting of brows, and the interest is sustained all through. Miss Young has much to reveal about this courageous, pitiful, happy-go-lucky spinster, who goes from post to post until she becomes housekeeper to a nonconformist minister. We see the family reflected in Miss Mole's discerning eyes, watch how they affect her life, and compel her to subjugate herself, and even bridle her tongue, in an endeavour to keep her position long enough to bring happiness to the minister's two unhappy daughters. The scenes between Miss Mole and the minister are rich in humour, inferred rather than expressed. The unhappy girls are treated with genuine psychological insight, free from sentiment and with exquisite understanding.

A very small tune is played in "When the Melody is Finished," a "Lilac Tune" song on an antiquated barrel-organ. John Scovil, an author, is spending a holiday in France leaving at home an almost too admirable wife. The rest of the story is obvious. A blissful holiday with a little Frenchwoman whose protector is away. Delightful opportunity for the man, which he indulges to the full, of contrasting this woman with his wife. Scovil dogmatizes on his return to domesticity, ". . . the woman who develops her womanhood spending herself for, even being used, if I may so baldly put it, by the man," still retains certain human advantages over her enfranchised sisters. And the hurdy-gurdy plays "Could I be true to eyes of blue, when I look into eyes of grey?"

The numerous lovers of Mr. Le Gallienne will welcome "The Magic Seas." There is much that is robust here, though the author's realization of beauty becomes increasingly more sensual than sensuous. The book has a wealth of adventure, excitement of divers kinds, love-making and marrying, all told with a zest to thrill the holiday book reader.

There is some altogether admirable work in "Keith of Kinnellan," and its sequel "The Falling Wind," but we feel that Miss Mackenzie has not been quite true to her own vision. Having persuaded herself that the impossible might be probable, she almost persuades us by the skill of her writing and the severity of her mental poise. Bertha, the kind, homely, unimaginative wife of Gilbert Keith, is a finely conceived character. Anne, the young French girl who makes her home at Kinnellan, is sensitively drawn. The tragedy of Gilbert's love for Anne is true right up to the time Bertha becomes aware of it. The story goes to bits then, a real Scotch mist descends upon the book, and all the characters appear unreal. After that, we have endless variations of a not-too-substantiated deluge, with a long-drawn-out picture of those irritatingly super-sensitive people who, though safe in the Ark, postpone indefinitely their ultimate, inevitable mating. No sense of duty or loyalty could keep Keith and Anne from each other's arms before the death of Keith's wife and Anne's friend. After Bertha's death, Miss Mackenzie is half the book getting them to bed, even though the wedding ring adorns the French girl's finger.

The Wooden Woman of Mr. Townsend's story was the figurehead of the ship "Heaven Belle," a thing of beauty to look upon, but whose ways were without joy. Crime marked her first voyage, and all her days were evil. Mr. Townsend takes us aboard the unheavenly vessel on her last voyage. It is discovered that officers and crew all bear the names of the wretches who sailed her first. Nemesis has come, and the crew fulfil their destiny knowing fearfully how it will work. This is the one weakness of the story, for the author is committed to telling it twice. Moreover, fantasy and realism are not convincingly blended. We accept "The Ancient Mariner" as truth because it is consistent throughout on the plane of its creation. The element of fantasy in Mr. Townsend's story seems an intrusion. Yet he can write of the sea with real power. The final scene, when, frenziedly aware that the hour of punishment is upon them, the doomed crew rush to their fate, is intensely dramatic.

KATHLEEN C. TOMLINSON.

## SOLDIER SONGS

**Songs and Slang of the British Soldier (1914-1916).** An anthology and a glossary edited by JOHN BROPHY and ERIC PARTRIDGE. (Partridge. 7s. 6d.)

**Fanfare, and Other Papers.** By JOHN BROPHY. (Partridge. 7s. 6d.)

THE first of these books can only be regarded as an experiment in anthology, for the volume is, within its compass, incomplete. Some soldiers, with very lengthy experience of the War, will be puzzled to account for the inclusion of some songs and the omission of others. The editors' introduction will be found of little help, for this is, in the main, a critical essay on a subject which cannot be subjected to criticism without becoming ludicrous. The editors are heavily in earnest when they ought to have been sprightly and gay. They attempt to explain why the soldiers sang certain kinds of songs, but with no success, for the simple reason that the soldiers sang because there was nothing else to do. The basis of many of the songs during the war was a healthy obscenity which the editors of this anthology assume to be peculiar to war. It is not, for its origin goes back to long periods of peace. Practically every song sung by soldiers in the war was fundamentally as old as the hills. There were new songs, of course, to fit the new war, but in spirit and in sentiment, they were extremely ancient.

The first fact about the average English soldier during the war was his simple faith. His favourite songs were in keeping with that faith. The later disillusion of the later novelists and critics hardly touched the humble private; the simple soul. He groused; endured incredibly; lived for the day, and sang. He, in common with this writer, in reading some of the psychological interpretations of the war begins to wonder if he ever served at the Front at all. He will be no less astonished to learn from the introduction to this book why he sang certain songs. The whole truth about soldiers' songs lies in the facts that they were sung as relief to feelings; as an ease to fatigue and boredom; as an expression of comradeship and good fellowship; as a sign of healthy zest and gusto. Open-air life in war or peace produces song in a perfectly natural way. It is all extremely simple until you begin to make it difficult. The songs fitted moods. Even the lewd songs about women can be appreciated and understood when the facts of life in France and Flanders, and certain forms of pre-war life, are remembered.

Some of the songs of a day in November, 1914, will serve as an explanation, if, indeed, any explanation is necessary, of soldier songs. A great shed at Southampton rang to the haunting tune of "Annie Laurie," sung by the whole battalion. It fitted the inner mood and thought of every single man. Up the hill at Havre "Tipperary," of course; "We're going to Belgium early in the morning" (not included in this book), and jaunty songs, because we were very proud and the people of Havre gave us warm welcome. In the tents at night snatches of sad and sentimental songs, mixed with lewd ones. In billets behind the line, full-blooded, lusty songs, and sometimes, in the line before battle, songs like "When you're hanging on the wire, never mind," rendered in this anthology as "The Old Barbed Wire." This song was droned half through the night of September 8th, 1916, by Connaught Rangers just in front of Ginchy as an encouragement to all who were going over the top the following day! All very natural and understandable, but nothing to make a song about.

While this anthology, in its selections, is fairly good, there is room for a much more ambitious work, for a book, in short, containing a fuller and more representative collection of songs, classified by moods. Some of the lewd songs rendered in the book with the liberal aid of dashes for certain words, could well be omitted, for they were rarely sung. "She was poor but she was honest," for example, which is included in this anthology, is an old classic, heard in many variations, in rough public houses and, on occasions, in country houses. It was not heard very often at the Front. The brief definitions of the British soldier's slang words are well done, but these cannot be said to have enriched the English language.

Mr. Brophy dedicates his book, "Fanfare, and Other Papers," to the late Mr. C. E. Montague, and in a very

sympathetic essay pays a high tribute to Mr. Montague's qualities as a man and a writer. Mr. Brophy fell suddenly under the spell of C. E. Montague's style—a very dangerous influence for any young writer who has not firm control of himself. There are many traces of Montague's influence in these papers, which, on the whole, are very pleasantly written. But Mr. Brophy is in some danger, as his "Apologia," with which his book opens, indicates.

FREDERICK HEATH.

## PARADISE

**The Last Paradise.** By HICKMAN POWELL. Illustrations by ALEXANDER KING. Photographs by ANDRÉ ROOSEVELT. (Cape. 18s.)

THIS book should either be given away to a rigorously selected few or sold at large prices to those who think that any Paradise is better than none. It is deplorably obvious that the surest way to arrive at the extinction of any rare and precious thing, most especially if it live, is to tell everybody where to find it. What happens to the stray hoopoe? Why must a station for the lizard orchid be kept secret? Again, why should one advertise the professional thieves that the family jewels are in the south-east corner of the garden one foot from the corner of the greenhouse? However, the mischief is done: it is all set out in the most elegant of type, with enough fine illustrations and photographs to break the resolution of the really honest, and, lest there should be any mistake, there is a map or plan.

The fact can no longer be hid. "Out in the Dutch East Indies, a week east of Singapore, a night east of Java, and just south of the Equator, lies the little island of Bali." Here for five years has lived André Roosevelt, whose "New York father, a first cousin of T. R., after founding the first telephone company in Europe retired, wed, and enjoyed the fruits of leisure." He confesses in the introduction that he is not able to do justice to the tale, and so he has been content to incite a professional journalist to stay in Bali and do it for him. All this, mark, to the end that the integrity, beauty, artistry, music and culture of Bali be kept unspotted from the world. Of all those things this fascinating book offers abundant evidence. That the men who have produced it are true lovers there is little doubt. Yet Roosevelt believes that the exposition of the uniqueness of Bali and its people will cause a movement for their preservation. "We want to make of Bali a national or international park, with special laws to maintain it as such. We want a heavy duty on automobiles, galvanized-iron roofing, white goods, &c.—in fact on all goods not essential to the natives. . . . We want a head tax on all tourists, and the money that will come in from that source could be used as the Government may see fit—a sum which would easily offset the loss of business of the importation houses." Faith may move mountains, but can it keep them in position? The faith in big dividends has moved continents, and though there are notable examples of resistance to exploitation it may be said that the only sure way to avoid being desired is to be undesirable.

All this seems damnatory of a book which has given me great pleasure. If it should deter anyone of peaceful, charitable, and uncovetous habit from sharing that pleasure it would be a pity. It may be recommended particularly to those to whom music is necessary, for music is woven into the stuff of the Balinese. They can understand Bach, but not Beethoven: Mendelssohn and Chopin sound cheap and sentimental. Bali is rich, leisured (and leisurely), and religious. Here, according to Roosevelt, are the conditions for great art; for a race of artists. He says (and who dare dispute it?) that Western civilization will kill all this beauty and joy. If so, perhaps it were better for the Balinese that the lava, which has already played a large part in its history, should make a merciful end of what seems otherwise destined to slow degradation.

The quality of the book makes it difficult to resist quotations; therefore there shall be one more (the author was not sure if it meant anything.) "The peace of Bali is for brown men. And this I know is the white man's

burden: that he shall dream dreams, and they shall mock him, that he shall seek what he cannot find, that in him there is lusting turbulence, and for him there is no Nirvana. He wants, I want—peace? Oh, I am not done with doubting, and cannot take what I cannot understand."

This book may, I fear will, fail of its objective. I wish and pray that it will not.

GEOFFREY TANDY.

## AFRICAN CHAPTERS

**The Life of John Xavier Merriman.** By SIR PERCEVAL LAWRENCE. (Constable. 18s.)

**African Drums.** By FRED PULESTON. (Gollancz. 15s.)

**By Way of the Sahara.** By OWEN TWEEDY. (Duckworth. 12s. 6d.)

**Tramping through Africa.** By W. J. W. ROOME. (Black. 15s.)

GREAT events in the history of Cape Colony took place in the fifty years which began with the discovery of diamonds there in 1865; its financial position shifted in a year or two from the edge of bankruptcy to unprecedented wealth and prosperity. The grant of Responsible Government which followed almost immediately improved its status and also increased the responsibilities of the local politicians, who very soon found themselves involved in wars with the Kaffirs and complicated disputes with the neighbouring Republics. The repercussions of the Zulu War and the first Boer War were strongly felt in the Colony, and later it was even more profoundly affected by the discovery of gold in the Rand and the consequent rise in importance of the Transvaal. Then came the Jameson Raid and the Boer War, followed by the Unification of South Africa. In all these events John Xavier Merriman—"J. X." as he was universally called—played an important part, and his biography by Sir Perceval Lawrence is practically a history of Cape Colony for that period.

Merriman might be called a professional politician, but only in the sense that politics were his life's work; he was no self-seeker—his efforts were genuinely directed for the good of the Colony as he saw it. His rigid, almost Puritanical rectitude is shown by his refusal to accept the Agent-Generalship in London—a position which he had always coveted—when it was offered him by a Cabinet whose members he had ceased to respect. He detested extravagance, and his firm, almost obstinate, economy in matters of public expenditure was sometimes the despair of his colleagues, but was undoubtedly of benefit to the Colony on many occasions. His friendship with Rhodes endured throughout his life in spite of serious differences with regard to policy, and Sir Perceval Lawrence's book contains some interesting details of this, and of his private life at his home, Schoongezicht.

Dr. Puleston's account of the life of a trader in Equatorial Africa gives a vivid picture of the country and the natives as they were forty years ago. We are informed that the author, who left Africa in 1896, is writing from memory, and though we may suspect that his imagination is as good as his memory the book is written in such a graphic style that we are carried along with the author, and it is only when we come across some of his experiences with cannibal tribes, or his account of a duel to the death between two crocodiles, each 35 feet long, that we lose breath. There is an interesting account of his meeting with H. M. Stanley and his companions during the unfortunate Emin Pasha relief expedition, and though the author is a great admirer of Stanley—the book is dedicated to his memory—we retain the impression that Stanley was hardly an ideal leader, and that the members of the expedition were not exactly a "band of brothers."

Captain Tweedie's adventurous journey from the Nile to the Congo and Niger and thence north to Algeria in a motor-car which he describes as a grocer's van, lay for a great part of the time through the same country as Dr. Puleston knew, and his account of it illustrates the enormous changes which the motor has made in the conditions of life in Central Africa. His observations were naturally limited to the country which bordered his route, but this very fact



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ALLAN MACGREGOR.

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### INFLUENCE OF CONTRACT UPON AUCTION

**A**UCTION and Contract, despite the gulf that in some minds seems to separate them, are, of course, closely related games, and most Auction players who are not too old or too tired to master Contract can be readily induced to interest themselves in its possibilities. Some may doubt this. But the reason why Contract is not gaining in popular favour very rapidly is not, I am sure, that it is being tried and found wanting; but that the numbers of those who are capable of explaining it intelligently to their friends and clubmates are still comparatively limited. And its principles have not, as yet, been presented sufficiently attractively in book form to secure the adhesion of converts on a wide scale.

There are many who play Contract occasionally—when they get the opportunity—and at other times continue to play Auction. Among players whose allegiance is thus divided, I can reasonably number myself; I sometimes indulge in a mild flirtation with Contract; at other times, I am tempted by the familiar wiles of her elder, but by no means ill-favoured, sister. And the point that I want to make is that I—and I think many others who, like me, play both games—am satisfied that occasional indulgence in Contract considerably improves one's Auction. Contract may or may not be the better game in itself—my own view is that it is only the better game if those playing it have attained a certain technical standard—but it certainly has a stimulating effect upon one's Auction.

This stimulus is exerted in three ways. In the first place, one *must* learn, when one plays Contract, to value one's hand with precision. This is something that the old-fashioned type of Auction player has never really done. When making a bid, he relies upon luck, guesswork, or what he calls "card sense," which to his mind may or may not mean what it means to mine: a capacity, based upon long experience, to assess probabilities correctly. He will take up a hand containing, say,

♠ K Q J 10 x x x    ♥ x    ♦ A x    ♣ Q J x

and will call Three Spades without stopping to ask himself whether, in the end, he is likely to make nine, ten, or more tricks with Spades as the trump suit. At Auction this is quite good enough. The hand is hardly likely to be over-called; but even if it is, the new problem presenting itself can be dealt with on the same lines. But at Contract, it is all-important that a plan of campaign which is strategically sound should be formulated at the outset. Game cannot be secured unless a bid of Four Spades is arrived at; and how to arrive at this bid and—perhaps—at the more ambitious bid of six or seven Spades needs thinking out from the outset.

Equally important is it to learn how to value one's hand when one is operating defensively. Can one afford to drive one's opponents into contracting for that extra trick, the attempt to make which will convert victory into defeat? Can one afford to double? How does the value of one's hand as an attacking proposition, *i.e.*, with one of one's own suits as trumps, compare with its value in defence? Such questions as these have to be answered, and answered

with precision, before one can hope to play Contract successfully at all.

Hence the first thing that the Contract player must learn is to value his hand *flexibly*—with reference, that is, to two or three different situations. He must know how to recognize his honour tricks, *i.e.*, tricks which are likely to make whatever the trump suit; he must know what extra tricks he can hope to secure as the attacking side; he must know his auxiliary and distributional values in defence. The sharpening of his wit in regard to these complex problems is of the utmost value at Auction.

Secondly, there is the bidding itself. To this I have already made some allusion. One learns at Contract to show—as far as circumstances permit—exactly what cards one holds. It is not good enough to say, as one does when one names a suit at Auction: "Here is a good big gun; let's have a pot at the other side with this." One must try to indicate precisely the calibre of one's weapon; its range; its vulnerability when counter-attacked; and the number and scope of the subsidiary weapons that one has in reserve. Only thus is one likely to take a fortified position against the extra hazards that the rules of Contract impose.

Now the practice that one gets at Contract, in exchanging with one's partner accurate information as to one's holdings, should make one a very much better Auction player. A great many games are missed at Auction through too ready an acceptance of the notion that, provided one secures the contract, any old bid will do. The "approach" method of bidding, upon which successful play at Contract is built up, can be applied at Auction with comparable success.

Finally, there is a related consequence of the more complex technique of Contract: that it results, through its elaborate bidding, in the making possible of a greater number of inferences as to the position of the cards. It is for this reason that some find the play of the hand at Contract less interesting than at Auction; though, to my mind, it can equally be made much more interesting. Be this as it may, experience at Contract teaches one to try to determine, through the bidding, the position of all the cards that matter; and experience of this kind, even though one cannot apply it so extensively, is as useful at Auction as at Contract.

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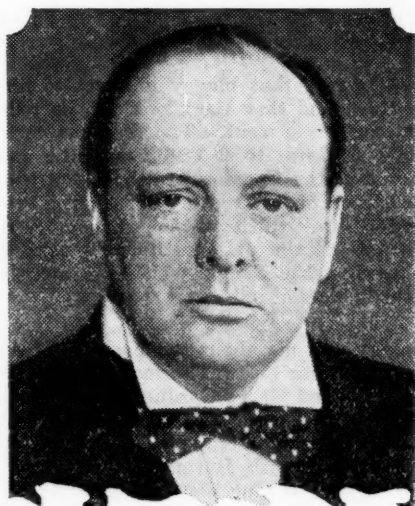
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## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

## "SHOCKS"—SHELL UNION—WARING &amp; GILLOW—GILT-EDGED BOOM—AMALGAMATED METAL

THE army of investors is now engaged, as it were, in a form of trench warfare. The trenches are the stocks or shares in which alas! they have dug themselves. Fierce attacks are made on their positions by the hordes of "bears." From time to time "shock" troops are employed to dislodge them from the trenches—there will be many more shocks for investors, as I have said, before the world slump in trade is over—and from time to time whole sections of the line are surrendered. It is a war of attrition. In Great Britain the investor's trenches began to be attacked early in 1929. No one then dared to imitate Lord Kitchener's forecast of a three-years' struggle, but some investors now believe that the war will last into 1932. In the last two weeks the battle has gone badly for the trench-holders. Lines of first-class industrial shares have been thrown on the market, and Home Railway stocks have fallen to new low records. There have been two "shocks"—the passing of the Shell Union dividend and the Waring and Gillow crisis. Shell Union common shares are now 14 against 25½ at one time this year, and Waring and Gillow 5s. against 28s. 9d. not many weeks ago. A general recovery—on "bear" covering—is in progress as I write, but investors must be prepared for worse things to come. "O God of battles, steel our soldiers' hearts." This is Shakespeare, but a fitting motto for the Stock Exchange to-day.

Readers of this page will not have been surprised by the passing of the Shell Union dividend. It was clearly foreshadowed in THE NATION of May 17th and August 2nd. In the first quarter of the year—always the worst for the big oil marketing companies—Shell Union made a loss, and in the second quarter it earned only half its quarterly dividends of 85 cents. Over the first six months it did not even earn its preference share dividends. Obviously its common stock dividends could not be maintained. In the third quarter the Company will fare better, as this is the period of the maximum consumption of gasoline, but the fourth quarter will not be so good. There is little prospect of dividends being resumed before, say, the spring next year. Tide-Water-Associated Oil and one or two Standard Oil companies have been able to maintain their earnings this year, but the Shell Union has been specially handicapped by the restriction of output in the oil fields in which it is heavily invested, and by the high prices it has paid for the marketing plant acquired in its recent period of aggressive expansion. The Company must now wait for better gasoline prices. An increase of 1 cent per gallon means an extra \$10 million in earnings in the year. The passing of the Shell Union dividend (for half 1930) means a loss of about £485,000 to the Shell Transport and of about £726,000 to the Royal Dutch. This should hardly affect the Royal Dutch and Shell Transport dividends. Attractive yields can now be obtained on these "investment" shares:—

	High Present 1930 Price	Div.	Yield
Royal Dutch ...	35 1-16 29½	24%	6.8%
Shell Transport	5 4 5-32	25% tax free	6.0% tax free 7.8% gross

The Waring and Gillow position calls for comment. The accounts revealed a 70 per cent. drop in profits, a shortage of working capital and loans due to the Company by the Chairman, Lord Waring, of £98,691, of which £68,692 represented "additions to loan account during year." On June 4th last, Lord Waring had stated that the accounts would show record profits, and that the dividend (15 per cent.) would be maintained. On August 1st payment of the preference share dividend was postponed. Lord Waring has now issued an explanation of his June 4th "forecast." It was hoped, he says, to include in the accounts "a substantial profit on the sale of a property not required for the conduct of the busi-

ness," and that if this sale had gone through, the directors would have been entitled to recommend the payment of a 15 per cent. dividend on the ordinary shares. Why should the sale of a property not completed on June 4th be included in the accounts for the year ending January 31st, 1930? In any case why should the sale of a capital asset be credited to the trading account? I learn that the property in question is the Princess Theatre site, which was sold by the Company in the financial year 1927-28, £172,585 of the purchase money was left on mortgage, the purchasers have now fallen down on their bargain, the Company has foreclosed, and a new purchaser has to be found. The accounts show that a reserve of £45,000 and £127,585 from the profit and loss account have been "transferred to reserve against mortgage debt." Meanwhile, it is hoped that the creditors who have obtained judgment will be satisfied by the appointment of Viscount Brentford and Sir Harry Peat and two others as a committee of investigation and by the resignation of Lord Waring as Chairman. The moral of this distressing story is that companies whose directors allow the chairmanship of the board to develop into an autocracy generally suffer for it. Mr. H. S. Horne, Mr. M. C. Harman, Lord Waring, and Lord Kysant are, or were, fine examples of business autocrats. Yet the ordinary shares of most of their companies are suffering the heaviest depreciation of any group outside the "rubbish" market.

The "bull" movement in gilt-edged securities must not be followed too far. British Government funds are now standing at record high levels:—

	Price	Yield £ s. d.	Yield with Redn. £ s. d.
Consols 2½% ...	56½	4 9 6%	
Consols 4% ...	89	4 10 0%	
War Loan 5% ...	104½	4 17 0%	
Funding 4% 1960-90 ...	92½	4 8 0%	4 8 6%
Conversion 4½% 1940-44 ...	100½	4 10 6%	4 11 0%
Conversion Loan 3½% ...	78½xd.	4 9 0%	
Local Loan 3% ...	65½	4 12 0%	

The "bulls" are arguing that money is likely to remain cheap for a long time, and that Bank rate will be reduced from 8 per cent. to 2½ per cent. The discount rate for three months' bills is down to 2 1-16 per cent., and so plentiful is money that the Commonwealth Government is renewing the £5 million of its Treasury bills which mature next week. But the shock to the gilt-edged investor when he learns of the state of the national finances next April may be far worse than the shocks which are now being encountered by the holders of industrial shares.

A correspondent asks me about the position of Amalgamated Metal. This Company was formed as an amalgamation of British Metal and Henry Gardner, the two leading firms in the metal brokerage business. British Metal held a substantial interest in the Imperial Smelting Corporation and had agency contracts with Burmah Corporation, Rio Tinto, and other British mining companies, while Henry Gardner had important contracts with International Nickel and the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada. Amalgamated Metal has now affected an exchange of shares with Metallgesellschaft and Société Générale des Minerais of Brussels, which are the leading metal brokerage firms in Germany and Belgium respectively. Assuming that the new ordinary shares issued by the Company to effect these exchanges will earn about 6 per cent. net, the income of Amalgamated Metal, on the basis of last year's earnings for British Metal and Henry Gardner, may be estimated at £374,397, which is equivalent to 8.25 per cent. gross on the Amalgamated Metal ordinary capital of £4,525,000. I do not, however, anticipate a higher dividend than 5 per cent. gross on Amalgamated Metal shares, which are now standing at 17s. to 18s.



